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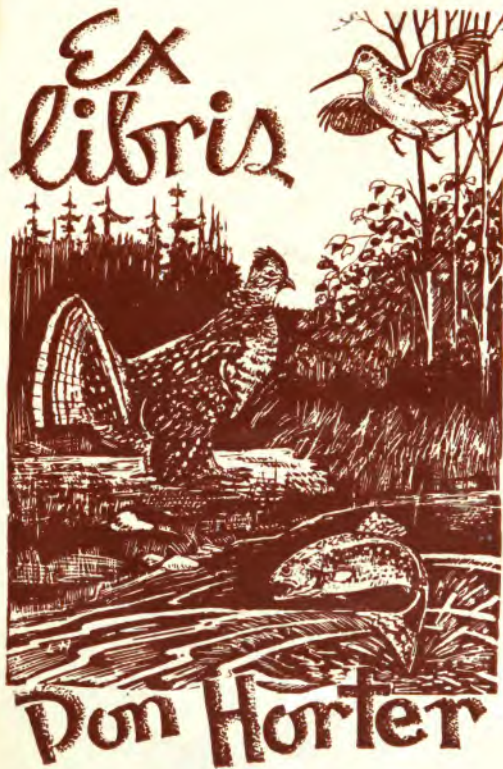
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ACTICE OF ANGLIN

IRELAND.

BY O'GORMAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I

DUBLIN  
WILLIAM CURRY, JUN. AND COMPANY.

LONGMANS, BROWN AND CO. LONDON.

1845.



very truly  
yours  
J. M. W. McKim

**THE**  
**PRACTICE OF ANGLING,**  
**PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS**  
**IRELAND.**

**BY O'GORMAN.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**VOL. I.**

**DUBLIN**  
**WILLIAM CURRY, JUN. AND COMPANY.**  
**LONGMANS, BROWN AND CO. LONDON.**  
**1845.**

**DUBLIN**  
**PRINTED BY J. S. FOLDS AND SON,**  
**6, Bachelor's-walk.**

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TO  
THE HON. JOHN PLUNKET.

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DEAR SIR,

To you I dedicate this work: it had been originally written for your instruction in the fascinating and delightful science of angling, and possibly for your entertainment. In my first intention, your proficiency in the art has convinced me of my success: whether I may be as fortunate in my ultimate object, I will not presume to say.

I remain, dear Sir,  
With the utmost respect and esteem,  
Most truly your's,  
O'GORMAN.

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## P R E F A C E.

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WHAT have I not to answer for, owing to the delay this work has met with in its progress ! How many casualties of various kinds have occurred in consequence ! How many rods of evil structure have been fabricated. How many wheels have been constructed on foolish and vicious principles ; how many lines badly prepared ; how many casting-lines odiously knotted ; how many hooks ill-turned and round-shanked, to the evident discomfort of the fly-tier, ill formed appearance of the fly, and missing of the fish ! How many good, wise, and salutary instructions and direc-

tions have been withheld from the angling world for years—for so long was this treatise (which was not at first intended for public use) on its road to maturity ! And now, what excuses can I make ?

At one time I have been unwell ; at another time printers were to blame, requiring “copy” of various kinds, difficult to be furnished by one, who had not before (at least with his own consent) appeared in print ; at another time the angling season had commenced, and during that period to expect any excuse better than that of Sir Humphrey Davy to the Bishop of Durham would be, in the last degree, unreasonable—“ My Lord, I shall work steadily at it when the fly-fishing season is over.” But the book, such as it is, IS WRITTEN, and as it appears it must, or ought to have a preface ; and this said preface is begun, and heaven only knows how I shall get through

it ; for I really hate writing, and dread notoriety. My wish would be, to steal to my grave, and not a stone tell where I lie. Shall I invoke the shade of Livy ? He was a good preface writer, and a modest ; or Samuel Johnson ?—his preface to Shakespeare's works is a good one. It is likely I may borrow an observation from him, though he is no favourite of mine. No ; I will not plagiarize from any one, at least without due acknowledgment ; but I will apostrophise the best, the fairest, the loveliest, the gentlest beings of our world—the angels provided by the Almighty for our happiness and companionship here,

“ To make the bitter draught of life go down.”

Those gentle and amiable creatures do I invoke for their protection, favour, and patronage ; convinced that if I am so fortunate as to attain this, my primary object,



the approbation of all other classes must necessarily follow.

How often have I witnessed the utmost patience and resignation in the fair sex, under the most distressing circumstances ! Have I not seen them bear wet and cold most philosophically, often stung and bitten by insects as large and venomous as the musquitoes, without complaint ; sometimes drenched with awful showers, and declaring themselves comfortable under the infliction ; often splashed by the merciless waves, when crossing large sheets of water, without a murmur ; sometimes when angling (for I *have* seen one or two lady anglers) scolded for wheeling in the casting-line, which was a knotted one, when a trout was hooked, and the top of the rod broken, when all the blame should attach to the brute that gave the good and gentle creature an ill-constructed casting-line ; but I really must

forbear, for such reflections are too melancholy.

To the eternal honour of the fair sex, "the Dame Juliana Berners, Prioress of a nunnery, near St. Albans, a lady of a noble family, and celebrated for her learning and accomplishments, by Leland Pitt Bale and others, was the first who wrote upon the art of fishing with a rod." This fact I have learned from *Berrow's Worcester Journal* of June 22nd, 1743, and the remainder of the paragraph is so interesting, that I shall not make any apology for inserting it—"We think it extremely unlikely, that a female at the head of a religious establishment, in which religion and chastity walked, like angel twins, side by side, would have written in praise of the art, if there were any thing in it at all derogatory from the high religious and virtuous tone that ever characterized Englishwomen."

It contains nothing of the sort ; and if in our in-door amusements, our thoughts, words, and actions are refined by the presiding companionship of females, we ought to do all that lies in our power to attract them to accompany us, and to participate in those field enjoyments which seem most adapted to the tasteful structure of their minds, and to the delicate structure of their persons.

Angling has still a further recommendation : it may be considered of pure British and Irish growth and practise. Out of these countries a good angler is seldom met. On the Continent the art is in its infancy. In France, though the country abounds in excellent rivers, the natural fly is almost the only mode of taking trout resorted to ; and on many occasions the wonder of the natives has been excited by seeing Irish and English anglers bring large quantities of

fish taken by the artificial fly, and in some instances they have even endeavoured to prevent its use, deeming it little short of witchcraft; but is to be hoped that this very conceited nation will condescend to borrow some little instruction from us in the fascinating art which has been hitherto peculiar to "the land of the brave and the free." On this point so much has been written in different chapters of this work that it is needless to pursue the subject further.

It seems that George the Fourth was an angler; but where, except in Virginia lake, I cannot learn, nor for what kind of fish. Did he ever catch a large trout or salmon?

"That is the question."

The Duke of Sussex, it has been said, was an angler. Nelson, even after the loss of his right arm, angled with his left. Sir Humphrey Davy was an excellent salmon

fisher. Archdeacon Paley, Robert Burns, Mr. Hogg, (the Ettrick Shepherd,) Professor Wilson, (Christopher North,) Thomas Wordsworth, Emerson, Woolaston, and Birch, were fly fishers. Professor Rennie and Mr. Jesse are anglers, and are said to have written treatises on the art; but it does not appear that any of those treatises go to the actual practice of it. Colonel Hankey is an excellent trout and salmon angler, and ties flies right well. Generals Egerton and R. G. Hare are good anglers—the latter, until he fished with me, was but a middling performer; but he very quickly improved under my tutelage. The best English anglers I have met with were Mr. Philips, of whom I have spoken in my chapters on the Blackwater, and Lord Ebrington, who is a quick, smart, and decided angler, and one of the most promising fly fishers I ever met.

Ireland abounds with good anglers ; and the best are those who are in the habit of angling in the most rocky rivers, or those that are full of stumps of trees in the bottom—such as the Shannon, Coleraine, Ballyshannon, Cooreclare, Fergus. On the Shannon, Mr. Simon Purdon is a prime salmon fisher, certainly one of the best. On this fine river I have not fished for some years, though I have obtained several permissions, of which I have not availed myself.

Among my own friends and acquaintances can be reckoned many excellent anglers, and some who have acknowledged themselves improved by my precept and example in our different angling excursions. Master Henn and his brothers are first-rate anglers, particularly Counsellor J. Henn, who is one of the best general anglers I have ever met. He can't tie flies, nor has he ever tried.

The Master ties well both for trout and salmon. The Lord Bishop of Tuam is a very good angler ; and so are his brothers John, David, and William. The three latter are, in some degree, my pupils, and I acknowledge myself proud of their proficiency ; and the two former are perfectly capable of assisting themselves in any piscatory emergency. Lord Howth is a right good angler, so far as I could judge from one or two days' angling. Mr. Edmond J. Armstrong, a good angler ; and so is Mr. Johnson, a Scotch gentleman. With these I will couple Mr. Michael Finucane, for the sole purpose of abusing them for the introduction of that odious machine, the otter, which is a selfish and barbarous invention, and only worthy of being used by a solitary ascetic. Sir Percy Nugent, and Mr. Joe Atkinson, of the county Westmeath, are good anglers ; and I hope they will not

suffer the otter to be used on the Westmeath lakes. To this catalogue many more names may be added ; but time presses, and something must be said on the business part of the work.

I have endeavoured to be as plain and explicit on the various subjects connected with the fascinating sport of angling as possible, beginning with the various kinds of rods, then pursuing the subject with observations on the wheel ; the lines next, then the casting lines, different methods of tying flies, shapes of hooks, kinds of fly-books for actual service, methods of constructing cross-lines and their links : in short, I have endeavoured, in turn, to notice every subject worthy of attention by the angler, and to point out how he can best assist himself in extreme or unexpected circumstances ; and if, in all cases, he will just make use of those eyes and fingers



attached to him by Providence, and obey the instructions herein given, he may rest assured that he will be able to attain the greatest degree of pleasure this science can afford him at the least possible pecuniary cost.

But this work must be read through to derive "useful knowledge" from it. I am not like the architect, "who, by way of proving the goodness and durability of his fabric, produced one of the bricks as a specimen of the work." No, the work must be studied closely ; for, though there may be some unnecessary detail, still there is generally some instruction interwoven into it, even where it appears most diffuse. I have commented very strongly on the various acts of parliament in force for the preservation of fish, and their inutility, from their complex provisos and conditions ; and shown how, when it was naturally expected that in the new act all would be

made clear and intelligible, and additional protection afforded, to the astonishment of every reasonable being, the act of the 10th of Charles the First (the only good inland fishery act ever made) is repealed, and an enactment produced, full of the most glaring contradictions and absurdities that can be imagined. Of this act I have written fully in the latter part of the work. Every day produces a fulfilment of my predictions, and "so much for Buckingham."

In the chapter on angling and anglers, a large and influential class of persons, the nobles of the land are unnoticed. Many of those I have known here, in England, and elsewhere, and I have always found them to be GENTLEMEN—more it is unnecessary to say, less it would be unjust to withhold.

To my numerous subscribers I feel most grateful. Strange to say, I am not indebted to my own exertions or solicitations for the high honour conferred by their patronage ;

yet it must be a source of pride to possess friends having sufficient influence to muster the array of rank, worth, and talent which has afforded its protection to this little work. When the illustrious consort of our beloved queen heads the list—when this list is graced by the name of the greatest orator and greatest legal judge this country has ever produced, with the names of several other of the nobility and gentry, of the bar, and of the army, and those of the highest order of intellect—when I consider these circumstances I am almost tempted to regret having undertaken the task at all, lest my performance should prove to have fallen short of the expectations formed of it ; particularly as I have neither had nor sought assistance, and I fear I may be found “d——d ungrammatical” in many instances, as Counsellor J. H. would say ; but it can’t be now helped—it is too late for regret. Of the practical part I have no fear, and I

hope such may be accepted as a palliative for my many classical delinquencies.

If I have too often appeared in *propria persona*, it has been done very unwillingly ; but from the nature of the work it could not at all times be avoided.

And now by writing a book, having with all other necessary antecedents according to the best authorities fulfilled the various purposes of my creation, and fearing the approaches

“ Of death’s inevitable doom,”

I will hasten to conclude. Thus, dear and highly-prized friends of my earlier days, and you not less dear and highly-prized friends of my more mature and declining years, I bid you an affectionate farewell, wishing we may once more assemble together, and if not here, that it may be

“ Midst pastures green above the sky,  
Where prizes far beyond the scope  
Of mortal man’s ambition lie.”



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# THE PRACTICE OF ANGLING.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE VARIOUS KINDS OF ANGLING-RODS AND THEIR CONSTRUCTION.

I COMMENCE with observations on the various descriptions of angling-rods. They may be classed under three heads:—the plain two-piece rod, the screw-rod, and the socket-rod.

The two-piece rod is undoubtedly the best; the butt of it should be in one piece; the top should be composed of two pieces, permanently spliced together; the first piece of the top should be good West India hiccory; the upper piece, lance-wood, which is a most invaluable timber

for the purpose, being tough, elastic, and retentive of its form. The butts of all two-piece rods are formed of one stick, which should be of well-seasoned crag-ash, without splice—a spliced butt always fails. Spear-wood is also often used, but it is difficult to procure a piece long enough for a good sized rod, and it is heavy, though it keeps its form well.

A three-piece rod I have the utmost abhorrence of, either screwed or spliced ; you cannot take it inside a carriage unless it be very small, and the two-piece rod is fully as portable outside.

A four-piece socket-rod, if well constructed, is an excellent one ; it can be taken in any conveyance, and is much preferable to the screw-rod—a description of craft I have more than once seen fail, and a day's fishing lost thereby, when the angler has been unprovided with a second rod ;

but neither of these latter descriptions is comparable to the two-piece rod for lake fishing, particularly where fish frequently rise near you, when, if you strike the fish *well* (which should always be done), the screw or socket-rod is apt to go by the board. The best way to guard against such a disaster is to have the two upper pieces made to join by a splice, instead of a screw or socket.

I will now point out the different lengths I approve of for salmon, pike, and trout.

For salmon, a great deal will depend on the river you fish, but in general from sixteen to twenty feet will be sufficient. In the Shannon, for spring fishing, the rods do not exceed the latter length ;—ten and a-half feet in the butt, and nine, or nine and a-half in the top ; the Limerick rods are often made on a very mistaken principle, having too much spring in the butt, which

endangers them, particularly if you throw underhand, (which method I will hereafter explain) or against a strong wind ; and no rod is worth a farthing which you cannot use so ; nor any angler good for anything who cannot get his fly out, even with a strong breeze in his teeth. In fact, every rod should be tolerably strong for eighteen inches above the wheel, which should be, in my opinion, invariably placed twelve inches from the thick end of the butt ; this I have found the best distance in all cases—one hand can be placed below the wheel, the other above, when you are fishing ; always holding the line between the fore-finger and thumb of the upper hand.

The top of a salmon-rod should be proportioned to the kind of line you fish with ; if the line be very strong, the top should not be too fine to the whalebone ; indeed, there should be two tops to all rods, one lighter

than the other ; as, when the season advances, you generally adopt finer tackle and smaller flies.

The loops for salmon-rods should be strong, and soldered with spiltre or silver—soft solder will not do for any loops. I have seen an entire set of bad loops torn down to the wheel by a large salmon in the Shannon, greatly to the surprise of the gentleman who was playing him, and who beheld his rod pointing straight to the sky, and the line level with his hands. On this occasion about forty yards of line and a fine fish were lost. Some loops are cut from solid bits of sheet brass ; they are very good if sufficiently rounded.

If you fish with screw or socket-rods, take care that the pipes are made of what is termed double brass, or good sheet copper. I would prefer the latter for the first pipe, the former for the second, it being lighter ;

single brass will never stand hard work ; it is only fit for those one-handed baubles used in brook-fishing. And here I think it right to suggest a means by which you may at any time convert your well-sized trout-rod into a brook one.

Have a short butt, from sixteen to eighteen inches in length, to fit the first joint of your screw or socket-rod, in place of the large butt, and your rod will then be perfectly adapted to groves, woods, or difficult places on the banks of small rivers.

I will now give my opinion on pike-rods. They should be invariably strong in the butt, but not actual stumps ; the top well shaped, and not extremely coarse, for which I will give a cogent reason.

In pike-fishing, in either lake or river, you have to take in your bait often ; you must therefore necessarily have a rod which will bear a short bend at the top, and if it

be coarse, it will be often broken. I have seen some very extraordinary pike-rods, particularly with Mr. Bilton, with whom I fished part of a day on Inchiuin lake. His rod had loops like curtain-rings, and did not bend at all—in fact, was a mere wattle.

Why this very fine and most sporting fish should be fished for in this way, I am at a loss to understand ; they are in our lakes at least most splendid and fine playing fish, and if well dressed, (the mode of doing which I will give in due time) equal almost to turbot.

I never fish for them with larger baits than small roach or trout-fly, or with tackle coarser than what I use for salmon, even sometimes with single gut, taking chance for pike or trout, as the bait ; but the gut should be well armed with slight brass or copper wire well softened, (the mode of



doing which I will point out in due time.) Counsellor J. H. and I have often killed pike of eighteen or twenty pounds weight, with single gut. I once killed one of twenty-nine pounds weight, but had him hooked in the eye with well-armed gut trolling for trout ; he played at least an hour and a-half, with a strong pull the whole time, but with a slight trout rod.

On some occasions a small jack-pike is used, and large fish killed with it, but it is a great straining of tackle ; for this kind of fishing a hand-line is the best, used in the following way :—

Have thirty or forty yards of very strong line or slight whip-cord ; roll it and secure it on a deal board about two feet in length, and six or eight inches in width ; proportion the size of your hook, which must be large, to the size of the jack you fish with, which is to be attached to the hand-line by means

of a strong swivel, at about three feet distance from the bait, through which the hook is to be inserted at the mouth and brought out in the side opposite the navel, and a slight curve left in it, to make it spin ; it must be sewed in the mouth to the chain with strong thread, and also secured about the bow of the hook. When you choose to fish with it, let out fifteen or eighteen yards of the line after your boat, and when the fish pulls, give him time to gorge the bait, and if he runs off with it, you may throw out the board to give him time enough, after which he is to be dealt with in the best way you can imagine to insure his capture.

When I come to treat particularly of the different ways of catching these greedy and bold animals, I will state some extraordinary instances of their voracity. One word more as to the rods fit to encounter the noblest of our fish—the salmon—the monarch of our

rivers ; the most cunning, the most sporting, and the strongest, for its size, of the finny tribe.

The rods should be always strong, and the lengths, as I have before observed, proportioned to the rivers angled in, and to the lines fished with ; for, if you fish with a heavy line, the top should be proportionably strong, but not so coarse as to prevent throwing the line effectually ; the angler, I have also shown, should always be provided with two tops, as, when the season advances, and the sun gets higher, the flies and tackle must be necessarily lighter. You can never throw a light line properly with a coarse top, and a heavy line is apt to break a slight one ; so that experience and judgment must be exercised on these occasions.

For spring-fishing on the Shannon, I have stated the best length for rods at from eighteen to twenty feet ; and I consider that

length sufficient for any river. On the Blackwater, Co. Waterford, they use the worst, the most unwieldy, and most cumbersome three-pieced instruments I ever saw—some of them twenty-five or twenty-six feet in length, and, in my mind, quite ineffective, particularly if the wind is not in their favour, for there is no such thing as throwing against the wind with them; and I feel the most sovereign contempt for any angler who cannot send his fly out against a heavy squall: besides, if you fish with very heavy flies, as must be often done, particularly, on the Shannon, Suir, Nore, and Blackwater, and many other wide and deep rivers, you cannot throw a fly of the kind I describe, with the wind strong in your back, except for a very little way, and you must then manage throwing in some way, across or against the wind, and if your rod has what is termed a great spring in the butt, you

run the risk of breaking it in a most disastrous manner.

Take, then, the following rules for all salmon-rods :—Strong enough, not too stumpish, with little spring for eighteen inches above the wheel, well proportioned, according to the line, to the end ; rather large strong loops, somewhat smaller to the top.

If you fish in narrow rivers, good strong trout-rods will answer the purpose, either two-piece spliced or four-piece socket-rods ; and in the butts of the latter, it may not be amiss to have a spear, which may be unscrewed when you begin fishing—they are very effective against dogs, or bulls. From one of the latter monsters I once had a narrow escape ; and to the strength of the butt and the goodness of the spike I owed my life, not having had any retreat, and being therefore obliged to make fight

whether I would or not. Further, never have a spliced butt of any kind ; and let your splice in the two-pieced rod, where you tie top and butt together, be a good long lap, not a short splice, or sharp in the points : it may not look perfectly beautiful, but be assured of its excellence (and a good angler will always look to the useful), for everything that comes into contact with the points of sharp splices, is sure to injure them.

The following scene took place between my friend J. H., our fly-tier and rod-maker Corney, and myself :—A very large and handsome trout-rod had been made for Mr. J. H., beautifully and exactly finished, but, from the construction I describe, had been broken once, twice, thrice, and on each occasion had been sent to Corney to be set to rights.

The last time, Mr. J. H. addressed him.

"MR. J. H.—Well, Corney, this is the third time the rod has been broken, and the two former times you assured me there was no harm done. What say you now?"

"CORNEY.—Take my word, Mr. J., it is all the better for it."

"MR. J.—Why, d—n you, you rascal, at that rate, it would be the better for being broken every day in the week."

I laughed immoderately at the sally of my excellent friend, and he himself did the same in a few moments. Corney was stunned. But some murmurs, nevertheless, escaped him, which I much fear were anything but blessings on the heads of both of us.

And now to conclude summarily my chapter on rods. Long butts, good clear ash; long tops, first piece spliced hicory, all other pieces lancewood; socket-rods, hicory first and second piece, the two

upper lancewood, (and, if possible, of one piece each), and to fit with a nice splice, as two sockets are sufficient, which ought to be of good hammered copper, soldered with spiltre, which is better than silver. There should always be a bit of wood adapted to open splices of all kinds, to fit them ; and when you are going anywhere, tie them fast on the different splices ; it is little trouble, and a great preservative. Let your loops be either solid or well soldered, and they should run opposite to, or in a line with the edge of the tied splices, or laps, and not on their centre or rounded part ; they are thus much stronger, and less liable to be broken :—and having said so much on rods, let me add a word on the method of looping them.

As it is necessary that an angler should be prepared for all contingencies—as nothing



is more important than having a rod properly looped, and as it is essential that he should be able to replace a loop when lost, I subjoin the following directions :—

Get a piece of sheet copper, neither too thick nor too thin, and with strong scissors cut it into little slips, capable of holding the loops, and about three-fourths of an inch in length ; have your silk (which should not be too slight) well waxed ; let the thickest part, whether butt or top, project from you ; then lay your silk on the part of the rod you are looping, and keep turning the rod with your left hand, to your left, holding the silk thread with your right, and letting it run closely and exactly for three or four turns ; then take your bit of copper, which is called a tier, let the silk thread run along it flat on the rod, where the loop is to be put, and well fastened ; then raise your tier, and under it, without

letting it down, put as many rows of the silk round the rod as you think equivalent to the thickness of the loop, which you will then slip on the tier ; you will then bend down the tier on the loop, pressing it with the back of a knife, and fitting it close to it ; by this means there will be no interval in the tying ;—after which, go on fastening till you come to the end of the tier ; then put three rows of the silk thread round the rod, loose and open them, the first near the tier, the two next after, and nearest to yourself ; then put the end of your silk thread through the three loops, and hold it, then keep turning your rod still to the left hand, until the three loops the silk has made are tightened down ; then pull your silk through, and all is fastened.

Always have spare loops and tiers ; the loss of one loop is often attended with the loss of a second, particularly in a top, which

is consequently more liable to be broken. It would not be amiss that every angler should be provided with a slight deal case for his two-piece rods ; it is easily fastened on the top of a coach, or on a mail-car, is light, and will prevent the rubbing which rods may be otherwise liable to, and the frequent loss of loops : four-piece screw or socket-rods can be taken inside.

The best tier for the splices of large sized two-piece rods is common sheepskin leather ; and so it is for all two-piece rods—the string nicely proportioned to the size of the rod. This observation applies equally to the upper splice of screw and socket-rods ; if this description of skin cannot be procured, try to get some nice foal-skin from your saddler, which may answer the purpose. In this instance, and in many others, you will find that “there is nothing like leather.”

## CHAPTER II.

## ON WHEELS, AND THEIR CONSTRUCTION.

I NOW come to speak of the wheels, or reels, whichever you may please to call them. I must say that I totally detest, abhor, and repudiate all click wheels, lock wheels, and multiplying wheels. They should be perfectly plain and strong, the plates not more apart than an inch and a quarter, or half; for large quantities of salmon line they should be proportionably high, the higher the better; and this is indeed your true multiplier: and mind, in all your wheels, if you should not have enough of line to nearly fill them, to put as much nice cord or pack thread on the inside next the axle, as will effect your object, for in wheeling

up or letting out, the fewer turns will then be necessary ; indeed, with a wheel such as I describe, an expert angler will never suffer a fish to run slack on him.

A multiplying wheel is not worth a farthing for anything but small fish. You cannot get up a weight without breaking your machinery, or dropping your rod to the water. I have had sad experience of this kind of wheel, of which I may hereafter speak—having spoiled the work and lost an immense salmon through its means.

My next objection is to the click or clock wheels, which I positively assert (and from experience) have the effect, particularly in calm weather, of driving trout to the bottom from the surface. This I have seen happen more than once. Some persons affect to think that fish have not the organ of hearing ; but that they have not only that sense, but that of smelling also in great

perfection, I have not the smallest doubt ; and here goes for an instance.

On the river of Ennis, in a deep hole, was a very large trout, which could not be taken, and never rose at a fly of any kind. I got a nice worm and small hook, and threw it out at about twenty yards above where he lay. He instantly made to it, came within a foot or so, and turned away without touching it : the smell only could have attracted him.

And now to sum up. Wheel, according to the tackle or the fish you angle for, high and short (that is, between the plates) ; for trout, an inch distance is sufficient ; for salmon and pike, from an inch and a-quarter to an inch and a-half, at most ; it must be made of good brass, the handle in one piece, without any revolving ivory or brass but itself for your finger. These are idle additions, and soon wear away. What has a

man a finger and thumb for, but to let the handle revolve between? Beware, also, of a visible screw in your handle. I once had a handle abstracted, the loss of which (having left my rod tied up when I went to dinner) I did not discover until I had a large trout hooked, which, as I had no means of wheeling up the line, got into weeds, and broke off, taking half my casting line.

Here my usual quickness failed. I should have pulled the line down, and lugged away; but, as it happened, I was "perplexed in the extreme." Another advantage this arrangement of the handle possesses is, that you can, at any time you wish, slip your line just under the part you hold in your finger, and it is then a lock wheel. I did endeavour to have axle and handle all in one piece, and so I should prefer; but tradesmen are obstinate, and very full of showing off the beauty of their work, and I could not make

them comprehend that a steel or iron axle was as handsome as a brass one. I have been, therefore, forced to give in for the present, but purpose making another effort.

It may be objected against plain wheels, that they are apt to overrun, and so they are ; but when a fish is running out rapidly, feeling the line slightly, with your left thumb laid on it, will prevent any accident of this kind.



## CHAPTER III.

## ON LINES, AND THEIR ARRANGEMENT.

I SHALL now treat of the various kinds of lines used by the best anglers, and the mode of adapting them to their respective purposes. They are the following :—Hemp silk ; silk and hair ; entire hair.

The first I never use. They are too heavy when wet ; they never take the oil well, and last a very short time, besides being apt to crack off, if the greatest precautions be not taken when stretching them to take out the twist. I have seen many instances of loss of fish, lines and all, by using this species of tackle. They are useful for a hand-line for pike, as I have in the first chapter remarked, with a float attached, to be occasionally

thrown out, to suffer the fish to gorge the bait at his leisure.

The silk and hair-line I consider a mischievous and foolish invention. They will never stretch evenly ; one will rot the other, and oil is rather a disservice to this kind of line : it must, besides, be very coarse, if intended for hard work, and is by no means comparable to the entire silk-line, which, if well managed, in the way I mean to direct, will be found the most effective for all kinds of angling ; and I here beg, once for all, to impress on your mind, dear reader, what I aim at teaching you ; it is this—“*To fish as fine and as strong as possible, according to your rod and the kind you angle for.*”

I therefore prefer the entire silk-line, either twisted, or of a new kind called “eight-plait line,” which is certainly very strong and good.

Now, if you prefer the twisted line, which

has more life and elasticity, take the following directions :—Bring your line to a large field, in which there may be a tree here and there ; fasten one end to a branch, and loose it out to its full length ; pull it well for about five minutes, then drop it on the ground ; go to where it was tied, loosen it, and run it on the little finger and thumb of your left hand till it is coiled up. If you do not comprehend this last direction, you will, perhaps, be instructed by the dear partner of your affections, or her waiting-maid, for women are more apt to learn and able to teach than we lords of the creation.

When this is effected, get some boiled oil, but do not depend on it till you boil it yourself in an earthen pipkin that will stand the fire. You will know when it is sufficiently boiled, first, by its burning a feather, and next, when there is a general outcry against you and the oil by every person within smell

of it. Let it nearly cool, but not entirely ; mix a little umber with it to darken the colour ; put your line into it for about ten minutes ; take and squeeze the oil well into it with both your hands, first taking off your coat and tucking up the sleeves of your shirt (rather a dirty process, truly) ; proceed then again to your field, fasten again at both ends, and strain pretty well ; go along it two or three times, rubbing the oil well into it ; get a mustard cask wooden hoop at the grocer's, take off the sharp edges, and wind your line well on it ; hang it to dry in some place where the smoke cannot get at it, for smoke is a great enemy to oil, and paint of all kinds ; then let it remain as long as possible without using. The fittest time for this process is the after season, when angling is over : the longer your lines are left without wetting the better, as the oil has time to harden. This process

will answer equally well for the plait and the twisted lines, either for trout or salmon.

When the season commences, in February, get a link of twisted gut to match the thickness of your trout and salmon-lines, taking care that the twist is the same as that of your lines, for if not, it will be always opening ; and mind to open a little of the ends of the gut-line, and put single knots on every strand of the gut, a little apart from one another, and also to loosen out a bit of the end of your silk-line, where you purpose to attach it to the gut-link, to prevent clumsiness ; after which join well and permanently, and put a sufficient noose to the end of your gut-link. Let all be tied down with good waxed silk, and afterwards varnished with good black or brown varnish, which may be also applied to a small portion of the wheel-line.

Now, on the Shannon, in the beginning

of the season, the tackling used is very coarse, and they only use a clumsy knot, for, though good, they are in general lubberly anglers, and, if not fishing for themselves, are totally unprovided for any emergency. Of this circumstance I once had woful experience ; and but once, as I ever after took care of what I was about.

The flies used by them in the early spring are very large and heavy, some tied on six or seven-twist gut ; but my strictures on flies shall be reserved for their proper place. I had forgotten to talk of entire hair-lines, made of horse hair, white or black, or both mixed : they are certainly more light and elastic than any others, but too coarse if they exceed nine hairs ; and then, one of that substance cannot be depended on for strong fish, either in lake or river, particularly where there are weeds or rocks ; but in clear brooks, and for small fish, they will do very

well, as you can throw them with the greatest precision, and they go out well against a wind. So here you may exercise your discretion.

You are never to oil a hair-line ; it would rot it ; nor when wet, suffer it to remain for any time on the wheel without drying ; and this latter observation applies equally to all lines, whether silk or hair. And having now got through the subject of the rod, wheel, and line, I will conclude with recommending, that in case of wet weather, a time when there may be very good fishing, you should be always provided with a bit of sponge, so perforated that it may be slipped on the butt of your rod, just above the wheel, the line to run over it ; it will absorb the water that would otherwise find its way into your sleeve, and whenever it becomes saturated, a single squeeze will rid you of its effects for a considerable time.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ON CASTING-LINES.

THE next subject likely to engage your attention, will be your casting-lines—whether twisted or single. I think that all gut should be stained with a solution of logwood and alum, which will bring it to a fine water-colour ; it should not be left too long, nor should the solution be more than milk-warm when the gut is steeped.

When you wish to have a twisted casting-line, the gut must be steeped in warm water till quite flexible, and all the links of each portion of the casting-line should be of nearly the same length, particularly if you twist with a machine ; and you must always take care that the twist of your wheel-lines and



casting-lines agree. In general, a casting-line of good sound strong three-gut is sufficient for most rivers. But the Shannon, in the early season, forms an exception : the casting-line anglers use there is about a yard or so of the very strongest silk-line they can procure, with a noose at the upper end, to which they attach the wheel-line ; the knot at the other end embraces the fly-link by its noose, both fastening by what they call the Shannon knot, which is certainly easily tied, and the more pulled together the tighter it will be, at the same time that it is not very difficult to loosen, but it is both lazy and clumsy work, and I approve not of it.

If you have not a machine for twisting, hold the end of the link between your teeth (having first knotted the three links together), put a small knot on each separate link, give it as many twists as are necessary,

and let some assistant hold each link, till all are twisted, then hold the link firmly by the untied part, and let the twist run in, after which, give an additional twisting with your fore finger and thumb, till the link is smooth and even.

At the head of my trout casting-lines, I always place a link of three-gut : the line falls better, particularly when you take care that the strongest is uppermost, gradually tapering to the end. In all casting-lines, I adopt single knots, drawing them together, and tying down with waxed silk : this prevents catching in weeds or rocks. Look constantly to your knots, lest the gut should wear or crack. Leave nothing to chance, remembering Doctor Franklin's advice and remarks—"For the want of a nail the shoe was lost ; for the want of the shoe, the horse was lost ; for the want of the horse, the rider was lost, being overtaken

and slain by the enemy, all for want of a shoe nail." So it is in angling. I don't think I was ever guilty of any neglect in this way without suffering for it. I will relate an instance.

It was on a 6th of February, the first day I had thought of salmon fishing, when I went to a rapid stream: the fly I was about to fish with was a very large Shannon one, on five-twisted gut. A little of the tying on the noose, or loop (the part by which it is attached to the casting-line), was loose, but not much. I had so little expectation of meeting any fish, that I only put it out of my wheel-line without any casting-line. I looked at it very often; my mind misgave me that I was doing wrong in not tying it better, but I was lazy, and the day close and warm—so to work I went.

When I had fished with the longest line I could throw, I let all my line run out by .

degrees, shifting it across the current : I was at this time standing on the edge of a quay, from whence I could not advance, and had scarcely begun to wheel up, when I got a pull that nearly hauled me off my perch, and had a salmon hooked, in perfect season. After great dragging (for I could not follow him an inch) I succeeded in turning him, and played him up the stream gradually, till under me, when, behold you ! just as he had nearly given up, my line flew aloft without the fly—the neglected tying on the noose having given way by degrees, from vile thoughtlessness and indolence.

Let your tyings be varnished black or brown ; they will last much longer. Many anglers use only knots, and these, to hold, should be double, which is coarse work, besides which they catch villanously in weeds.

A very beautiful and interesting lady once offered to instruct me in making a

single knot which would not slip, but I was so much afraid of being tied up in it (being a fatalist) that I declined the instruction, and rested satisfied with the two single knots drawn together, and the ends of the gut tied down as I direct ; and there is a material advantage attending my plan. The single knots being of very small bulk, your casting-lines may be as long as you wish, and you may wheel in as much as you like of it when you have a fish hooked and almost tired, which you may not be otherwise able to get near enough to ; and recollect, that the finer you fish, particularly in mild weather, the better is your chance of sport.

Much may be said about how many flies should be angled with for trout. In rough weather I have often used three in a lake, generally but two, and if very calm, only one—in a river, except for fry or small

fish, never more than two, and at night I think one sufficient. Mr. Giles Daxon, who was an excellent trout angler, never used more than one on lake or river, and generally killed much fish : but in rough weather, and even in some lakes, he was decidedly wrong ; for in Dromore, at the time when it was, I may say, a lake, the drop fly always used to rise and kill more than the tail fly ; but, alas ! poaching with long nets, even under the eye of sportsmen, has utterly destroyed the finest run of trout that I believe were to be had any where, varying in weight from three to ten pounds, sometimes more. To what I now assert, that excellent man and prime sportsman (now no more), the late master of the rolls, could, if alive, bear testimony, and when doing so would vent mental execrations against men, however dear to him, who have aided, even by sufferance, in the depopulation of this charming

lake ;—but this is a digression : and I now proceed to a summary of my instructions on this head.

Casting-lines water-colour, as directed ; all, whether single or twisted, made with single knots, well drawn together and tied down with waxed silk, afterwards varnished, the strongest links always to be next the wheel-line, and tapering down to the end. The different observations made will apply equally to the links on which the respective flies are tied.

## CHAPTER V.

ON THE MOST CORRECT SHAPE OF HOOKS, AND THE MISTAKES  
SO FREQUENTLY MADE IN THEIR FORMATION.

I HAVE treated of fishing-rods, wheels, and lines—I now direct attention to the shape of your hooks.

They should be (no matter what the size) invariably round in the bow—rather deep, and perfectly straight in the point. In general the makers give them a turn out from the beard, which is a most pernicious plan, and causes a liability of the hook to break in that place ; it besides creates a greater resistance to its quick entrance, particularly if it strikes a bone ; whereas, a straight-pointed hook generally gets quickly through any obstruction : indeed, to please my own fancy, I should prefer



that the point of my tail or long fly should incline inwards a little, and the points of the hooks I should use for my drop, or bob fly, should be quite straight.

The reason of my making this distinction is, that the long fly being deeper in the water, and the hook being a little inclined in, it will be more apt to lay a fast hold, whereas, the drop fly generally skimming the surface, the straight point will be found more adapted for that position. This is a nice distinction ; but as this treatise is intended to be chiefly practical, I consider it highly necessary it should be attended to. The inside and the outside part of the shank of the hook should be filed flat, and the end of the shank a little turned up to prevent cutting the link where armed. The best fly-tier will not be able to make his fly sit well, or prevent its turning on a round-shanked hook, without a great deal of diffi-

culty. The Dublin hooks are for the most part round-shanked, and being made from wire, the points and beards are apt to go.

The Limerick hooks are decidedly better, certainly unexceptionable if made with care, and free from the twist outward from the beard, which their makers have a hankering after.

There should be a little curve in the shank of all hooks: the fly looks better, and the curve gives the little inclination inwards, which I have taken pains to describe as necessary for the long fly, but not for the drop fly—the hooks for that purpose should be, as I mentioned, straight in the point, and round in the bow. In my next chapter, I will treat of the different receptacles necessary for keeping hooks, flies, and feathers, and when I have done with that subject, will proceed to instructions for fly-fishing of all kinds and sorts.

## CHAPTER VI.

ON THE PROPER DEPOSITORIES FOR FLIES, FEATHERS, AND COLOURS—WITH CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS WHICH SOME MIGHT DEEM IRRELEVANT.

As there is nothing so much wanting to a good angler, as proper depositories for his various tackling, I shall proceed without preface to express my thoughts on this most important subject.

Go not, therefore, to a tackle-shop to throw away your money on ill-formed and inefficient pocket-books, where the flies are all made up in small rolls. Nothing can be more distressing to a good angler than the trouble necessary to be taken in straightening the links before fishing with them. Now do as I shall direct.

Try to procure three or four well-bound

novels, but lay not your unhallowed hands on the standard ones, and by these I mean the Vicar of Wakefield, Fielding, Smollett's and Sterne's works, Richardson's *Clarissa* and Sir Charles (though this latter is too much ornamented for my taste), Caleb Williams, many of Scott's—for instance, *Old Mortality*, *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, *Heart of Mid Lothian*, *Quentin Durward*, *Peveril of the Peak*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Abbot*; do as you please with the *Monastery* (I hate monasteries and nunneries); spare not Scott's rubbish, for there is a great deal of it in prose and verse; spare *Anastatius*, *Cyril Thornton*, and most of Bulwer's works; the latter are true pictures of English life; spare *Banim's*, they are Irish life; spare *Lover's*, too; spare all Campbell's works, he has written too little; also *Moore's*, except his paltry *Fadladeen* prose story, miscalled *Lalla Rookh*: he is our countryman, and

the sacred fire of liberty illumines his works ; spare Lord Byron's, except his ode to Napoleon (it has disgraced him)—tear out that ode, and put a parchment in its place. Could he dare accuse Izaak Walton of cruelty, and yet have written such a poem ? Melancholy to think that our greatest men should in so many instances have laid themselves open to the charge of cruelty ; but, alas ! the page of history bears witness against them.

Lord Byron has made some amends by his forgiveness of the spider—

“ Go, poor spider, go.

But take care how you bite Sir Hudson Lowe.”

I find myself getting critical, instead of continuing my instructions ; so I must resume.

Tear, then, as many leaves out of any novels which you may find, on perusal, worthless, or abounding with immoral descriptions,

and fill their places with parchment covers, open at one end, and the full height and size of the binding of the volume—by these means, your flies can be made up tolerably large, full as large as the breadth of the book—then for colours, you need only sew some leather ends to prevent them from flying out, in any of those works that may be of little or no value as food for the mind.—I perceive, by the way, that I have been guilty of great remissness in not noticing some admirable works by women, such as *Evelina*, by Madame D'Arblay, and *Discipline*, by Miss Brunton. As to *Self-Control*, "I shall not presume to control your judgment, reader." Miss Edgeworth has also written many admirable works, as have several others whom your taste will lead you to appreciate as they deserve.

Two or three of the books I allude to will hold your colours, flies, and hooks.

For your feathers, have an oblong cedar box, the length of the tail feather of the gold pheasant or macaw, with an equal division the full length of the box ; and for the breast feathers and top knots of the pheasant and other valuable foreign birds, have parchment pockets to suit their respective sizes, to be deposited in said box, which should have a sliding cover to run in and out. The greatest care is necessary for the preservation of feathers from moths and insects : a little whole pepper is found useful for this purpose ; but there is nothing so efficient as the cedar box.

## CHAPTER VII.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR SALMON FISHING FROM A BANK,  
A SHORE, OR STRAND.

I NOW enter upon a subject most important to all anglers—general directions for salmon-fishing; and, before proceeding farther, I will have the hardihood to say, that I never yet saw the man who could throw a salmon line as I could, or kill more fish, even in those rivers in the neighbourhood of which they had lived for years, provided I had but a glimpse of their tackling, and two or three days' observation of the place in which they angled.

Be attentive, therefore, to my instructions. Provide yourself with a good canvas or ticken bag, at least two and a half feet in length, and of a sufficient depth to carry



two or three salmon, which, if you be unattended, will be as much as you will reasonably wish to be encumbered with. Have broad leather straps attached to the bag with a strong buckle, and a good many holes in the strap to lengthen or shorten, with two loops at proper distances on the outside, where you may occasionally put your gaff while you are fishing on clear grounds (it won't do in cross places.) Let the handle of your gaff be five or six feet in length, "fine by degrees" to the iron. I do not approve of screw gaffs that fit into the handle of a landing net ; I think they are unhandy ; but in this respect you may exercise your judgment ;—and now as to your rod—much will depend on the breadth of the river : if narrow, from fourteen to sixteen feet will be sufficient—if broad, from eighteen to twenty ; but in no instance, if constructed according to the directions here-

tofore given, will a larger rod be necessary.

Your line must be as strong and as fine as the rod is fit to throw.

If you fish with very large flies, as it is likely you will in the spring months, your line must be tolerably heavy. Your casting-line should be of three or more twisted gut, tapering to the end to which the fly is attached, which must also, according to its size, be tied on a weaker or stronger link.

Always have in your bag a "*priest*:" this is the name we anglers usually give a short stout stick, about eighteen inches in length, with which we strike the salmon to kill him, just at the junction of the neck and head, where Homer's heroes frequently operated. This is an instrument it is cruel to want. What can be more distressing to a humane mind, than seeking for a large stone, or waiting to cut a bush or bramble, to put

the poor animal out of pain, and all the time your fly and hook in the utmost danger ? The fish should be always killed before you attempt to extricate the fly.

I now suppose you arrived at your fishing-ground, and commencing at the head of your course or current ; and now—*mind yourself*.

Always begin with a short line, keeping a proper distance from the river ; fish first near you ; lengthen your line by degrees (never stirring from your first position till you have thrown as long a line as you can tolerably master) ; always throw rather down and across, but so as that you can be satisfied that no fish can avoid seeing your fly : don't raise your hand too suddenly after throwing out ; then draw your fly gently, if the current be rapid, and occasionally shaking your hand, particularly whenever the fly comes into an eddy, or

smooth part of the stream ; then fish down step by step, never holding your hand too high, lest, if a fish rises, you should not have sufficient power to strike him.

It often happens, particularly in the early season, that you are taken under water : now, in either case, whether the fly is taken under or over, always, if possible, strike low, that is, with the top of your rod as near the water, either right or left, as circumstances will admit of. I am convinced it is a much better method than raising your hand high.

Don't strike a salmon too quickly—let him get nearly out of sight after his rise before you pull at him, which you must do with strength proportioned to the size of your fly, never with a short snap, but with a fine, strong, long pull.

When you have him firm, lean on him at once, fairly bending the rod, till he runs

out ; let the line run between your fore finger and thumb till he stops, then be at him again. He is a fish that, if you give him any respite, and if he has a rock or stump to get to, and that he has a slack line, will be round it in double quick time ; so be always on the alert.

If he comes to the surface, and keeps tumbling and splashing, then for your life hold him as hard as your tackle will bear ; if you do not, ten to one that he either shakes out the hook, or gets his tail across the line, which he will by that means endeavour to break. Lug him fairly, and if you do so with strength and judgment, always taking care not to hold too hard when far from the bow of your rod, it is more than probable you may bring him to the gaff, but be always at him, particularly when near you. I need not observe on the folly of holding a fish in his race ; don't

attempt it ; but after his spring, or whenever he stops, then give him no time for consideration—in short, literally obey the above instructions.

It often happens, that one occupies a position, from whence there is no such thing as following a fish : in that case, *if your line is nearly run out*, take your finger off the wheel, raise your rod high, and behind you, and throw it forward. This is what we call giving a slack : it often happens that the animal thinks himself at liberty, when he generally turns back. If such should happen, wheel him up softly, holding your rod low to the water, till you get him again under your bow—then lug at him, butting him fairly ; and if he gets away again, you have only to try which is the strongest, always endeavouring to avoid letting him come too near the surface ; to prevent which, almost dip the point of your

rod obliquely in the water, never changing from right to left till he is again wheeled up, after which, again lug at him, until his resistance is at an end; and the moment he is gaffed, let him be priested before you take the hook out; then throw your fly into the water, and whisk it two or three times into the air; examine it, and see that the fly and the point of the hook are not injured; if the latter be blunted, and that you have not an exact match, take a small, half-round, very fine cut file, which you should always have in one of the pockets of your book, and sharpen the blunted part carefully; then look to your links and line, recollecting Franklin's advice—"Leave nothing to chance."

Be always provided with a sharp knife, waxed and unwaxed silk, strong thread, some fine packthread, and good wax. There is no knowing what may occur in the course

of a day's fishing, and it will be seen by-and-bye how I have suffered in the days of my inexperience, from not having adopted the necessary precaution which I now so strongly recommend.

The Shannon, for the most part, is fished by boat, and the angling is of two kinds, either by what is called dragging, or throwing the fly in those great currents that are too rapid to be dragged. I shall endeavour to explain both methods.

In dragging, the boat is brought to the head of the course or current you are about to fish, and there held with strong poles shod with iron : every boat or cot is provided with three rods, wheels and lines (never less than two) ; and the usual plan is to have two flies, and a loach, or callaghróo, as it is generally called, or a very small fry, or gravelin, or perhaps three flies, if the bait is not to be had : the lines are then



let to run out, to the extent of eighteen or twenty yards, and the boats are meanwhile rowed from side to side of the river with oar and paddle : sometimes two oars must be used, the paddle assisting and steering ; the current always keeps the flies and baits their full distance from the boat ; one rod is placed at each side, tolerably well bent, and lies against a little peg to prevent its slipping off ; the lines of the side-rods are always turned under the handle of their wheels—not so with the centre or tail rod, which lies flat along the boat ; the line of this rod is either held in the hand of some one in the boat, or left loose altogether, and for good reason ; for it not having the elasticity the side rods possess, if the line was made firm, would then be subject to a straight pull, which might carry away every thing before the rod could be bent on the fish. Each time the boat

crosses its course from side to side, it falls down a little, the flies and baits keeping their proper distance, and whenever either of the side-rods have a pull, they are always well bent on the fish before the line is taken from under the handle of the wheel : if the centre rod has a pull, the line is let run for the purpose of procuring a proper bent on the salmon : in all cases, if the shore is fair and free from rocks, you usually make to it, and endeavour to kill from thence, particularly in the spring, when the waters are high and the fish large ; and gaffing a large fish into a flat-bottomed cot is a rather serious affair in a river so wide and rapid as the Shannon.

If you fish the rapids of the Shannon (those streams that cannot be dragged); such as several of the Donass and Castleconnell waters, take care to provide the

best and most experienced cotmen, of whom there is no want, and who will place you in the positions best adapted for throwing the various currents. This you must do, standing up in the cot, which is always well held by means of the poles already noticed ; and here it will be expedient that you be very steady, and have your sea-legs well in requisition.

You commence, as usual, at the head of the stream, with a short line, gradually lengthening until you throw the largest quantity of line you can master, always noticing, that as the fly comes round into the eddies, the hand is to be well shaken, but not so much in the very rapid parts of the current. As the flies you fish with at this time are very large, when you want to throw out, you must suffer the current to take the fly almost straight from the top of the rod, which must be then almost level

with the water. You then gradually raise your rod till you judge the fly is near the surface, when, with the quickness of lightning, you throw the fly behind you, till you either find it check you a little, or judge that it has attained its due distance. You then throw it with sleight and strength from your elbow and wrist only, ever taking care not to throw your body with it. In this way you fish to the end of your reach; and let the day be as it will, there is little danger of your feeling cold after fishing two or three of these streams as I direct.

It sometimes happens, that in the very act of whipping the fly out of the water, and with strength and quickness, a detainer is laid on you by a very large fish; in that case, he gets it well, and there will not be much harm in the angler's looking principally to his footing for a few seconds.

You can't throw those very large flies with the wind in your back, but the cotmen, particularly as the angling is carried on in the middle of the river, will place you in the best positions.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SPRING SALMON-FISHING CONTINUED—WITH MR. FINUCANE'S  
LETTER.

IN the former chapter I have endeavoured to explain the different ways of angling on the Shannon. I will now describe the most efficient methods of fishing from a bank, or shore, convinced that I cannot be too explicit on this subject, particularly as regards spring-fishing, at which season the fish are larger, stronger, and of finer quality than late in the year, and the sport in every way more grateful to the accomplished angler.

When (in the fishing phrase) you "*rise*" a salmon, should he miss the fly, observe how he comes to it; if he shows himself

well and eagerly, you may almost depend on hooking him ; but don't throw over him for a few seconds, let the fly go deeply and slowly by him at first ; you may then shake your hand a little, but observe that after rising he may possibly drop down a yard or so, in which case, you must lengthen your line a little, or fall down a step ; if he should not then take, let him alone for about five minutes, and change your fly to one of a somewhat smaller size, and not so gaudy as the one you commenced with ; try him again, but do not dog him ; three or four casts will determine whether he will take or not.

If the river is narrow, and that you can get over to the off side, throw from thence, so that the fly may come over him the reverse way to that he first observed, and it is ten to one he will then have you. I have witnessed the most decided success from

this method, both in my own case and in that of others with whom I have angled, and who have tried this practice.

If all fails at that time, and that you purpose returning to where you had risen him, which may not be much out of your way, let him alone, till, in the common phrase, the *sun goes back of him*, for in the early spring, 'tis full time to commence at ten A.M., and from two to four or five P.M. is certainly the best part of the day. When the season advances, early and late tell best, often till quite duskish in May or June.

The loach (parr or gravelin) small fry, and even the large blue-head or lob-worm, are most killing in the early spring, when throwing a long line is not necessary, or that you fish in a boat or cot, or in a narrow river ; but assuredly nothing hurts fly-fishing more than the exhibition of



baits in salmon courses. I recollect that in the Shannon it was considered unsportsmanlike to use them; and doing so has certainly the effect of making the fish careless of rising for a considerable time.

Now as to your flies :—Much will depend on the height of the water, and state of the weather. If the weather is cold and rough, large gaudy flies are in general the order of the day ; for instance, the following :—A black fly, orange tail, yellow heckle, white tinsel, tied gaudily—an orange-bodied fly, green tail, black heckle, same tinsel, tied similarly ; the magpie, half-black, half-orange, tied same ; an entire black fly, black heckle, orange head, tied same. A half-green, half-orange fly, crow or cock heckle (black), only about the orange half next the head, yellow tinsel, also tied gaudily ; the green part of the peacock feather that lies along the back of the bird

is excellent for half this fly, and in my mind needs no heckle, it being fully sufficient to have one on the orange part, as above directed.

And now for some changes. The grey fly, of donkey's fur, rather light, mixed with a little bright-brown pig's fur, white tinsel on more than half the body, bright or deep claret colour under the wing, and on this part only a deep-red heckle, jib rather gaudy, but not the wing, which ought to be good brown turkey feather, with pheasant tail, guinea hen and macaw side feather ; small dark-blue mohair head : this is a most killing fly at all times and of all sizes, according to the season ; the same kind, with yellow tinsel, brown mallard or turkey feather wing, mixed with a little of the green feather on the peacock's back ; same jib and side feathers, or swimmers, as some anglers call them.

The half-blue light colour, half-orange, white tinsel on the blue part, which is of dyed pig's fur, and this part without heckle, then orange or bright claret colour under the wing, without tinsel, but with a bright red heckle, wing gaudy or plain, according to the height or state of the water, and the sizes to match the early or late part of the season.

The various shades of brown are generally tied with gold tinsel or cord. On many of these flies, particularly the larger sizes, the jay heckle may be placed between the head and side feathers.

Note.—Whenever you meet an old cock—a game cock is the best—with deep-red heckle, buy or steal him : he is invaluable for either salmon or trout flies ; but beware of St. Martin's day, which is generally fatal to this bird. The common Irish are as intent on the sacrifice of a cock to Saint

Martin, as Socrates was to Æsculapius. Perhaps the saint was a descendant of the physician ; and many pious divines, indeed, have imagined that Socrates was a Christian. This subject may be worth the attention of Judge Jackson and the Bible Society, to whom I cheerfully refer it, not being at present disposed to give it further consideration.

As the season advances, there must be a decrease in the size of your flies. A dark olive fur, with a greenish shade, is a most excellent fly, tied with gold cord on the body, and a red heckle dyed yellow, not gaudy, with brown turkey feather or dark mallard wing, and a few strips of the green part of the peacock feather already alluded to at each side of the turkey feather—the fly middle-sized.

It is advisable that you should have a second casting-line rolled round your hat,

with one of those changes I have described, and which, if the furs are well dyed, will not be affected by the sun, for it must be remembered that strong heat will not only change silk, but even the vivid brightness of real pheasant feathers ; and I recommend that all gaudy flies, when put by wet, should be deposited in a box, or the most open covers of your fly book.

A gentleman, who had fished much in the Suir, the Nore, the Barrow, the Blackwater, and the Lee, made a most valuable suggestion to me in one of our confabs. It was this :—that when the natural trout-flies begin to appear on the rivers, your salmon-flies should be as nearly of their colour in the body as possible. On this suggestion I have since acted, and have had the greatest success, particularly after rising a fish with a gaudy fly, and then throwing over him one as nearly as possible of the

colour of the trout-fly on the water. But I have invariably, in the first instance, if the river was dark or turbid, fished with gaudy flies, and have had anglers laughing at me, till I had a fish hooked, to their great astonishment.

In fine, a good angler must be provided with flies of all kinds and sizes. Sometimes nothing will be looked at but gaudy flies ; at other times none but very plain ones. One other observation :—In cold weather, and early in the year, I have found silver tinsel or cord best ; in warm weather, yellow.

I think I have now nearly exhausted the subject of spring-fishing on most rivers ; but the Shannon will require a separate chapter.

The flies I have described will do equally well on the Connemara rivers and lakes, but must be of sizes proportioned to the

season : there are also many shades of green, both in silk and fur, excellent in the months of April, May, and June ; also the grouse Lochaber, yellow or orange body, five rows of gold cord, the grouse feather rolled round, good throughout the year. This fly is often varied, and green used for the body, and a partridge feather used instead of the grouse ; but of these varieties, and the most approved methods of tying them, I will speak hereafter.

And now to conclude. Look to all your tackling ; when a loop fails, put on another ; mind Franklin's advice—"for the want of a nail, the shoe was lost," &c. &c. ; fish not with a worn or jagged fly—you may lose a fine fish and a tried hook ; mind the knots of your casting line ; have a second one tied round your hat, as directed ; have a bit of sponge just above your wheel, to intercept the rain-water, for there is often

sport on a rainy day ; let the line be run out underneath the lowest round bar of the wheel—some prefer having it over, of which practice I disapprove ; always keep your line between your fore-finger and thumb, and when running out, feel it gently ; have your bag, priest, and gaff always at hand ; use only worsted stockings, and if you are obliged to wade into an island or angling course, put off your stockings, walk across in a pair of old shoes, and when you arrive, put on your stockings and good shoes again. Be careful of yourself on high banks, particularly in gaffing, or it may befall you as it did me, when I tumbled into the Blackwater, on a second of April, and a very cold day, in my eagerness to catch a salmon. On this occasion, but for being a good swimmer, my piscatory adventures would have had an end. I was, of necessity, obliged to abandon rod, gaff, and salmon,



having been carried a considerable distance by the current, which was, at that time, strong, in this very rapid river. When I recollected myself, I made to the bank, which, when I reached, I was up to my arm-pits in the water, and concluding that I could not be much wetter, I continued wading up along it until I found my gaff and rod, and, to my great surprise, the salmon still hooked, which played me a full quarter of an hour additional in the pleasant position in which I was placed. I at last gaffed him, (a fine spring fish of twelve pounds) and here I was posed, indeed :—above me was the high bank, which I would not dare to attempt—below me was a good strand, but between me and it was a deep hole, which I should be obliged to swim through—and opposite me was tolerably safe landing, not approachable except through strong briar-bushes. I had no alternative ;—I managed

to throw the salmon up into the field, afterwards threw up the gaff, next took down my casting-line and fly, wheeled up the line, flung in the top and butt of my rod separately, and finally made my way through the bushes, well scratched and torn.

I had been about an hour altogether in the water, and on my emerging from it, felt as warm as I ever did without being in a violent heat, so much so that I almost contemplated walking a mile further, and wading into the island stream near Lismore; but I, perhaps luckily, changed my mind, and returned to my brother's, whose house was a short distance from the river, and where I was a most welcome guest, as, indeed, was the salmon, it being the last week of Lent, and no sea-fish to be had. Much difficulty occurred in uncasing me from my surtout-coat and my other habiliments, which were, ever after, of little ser-

vice, having shrunk to utterly inadequate dimensions.

In case of sudden cold or wet, if you have, or can procure a raw onion or two, eat it by all means ; nothing will keep the cold more effectually from your stomach. Of this, Colonel R. G. Hare (now major-general) and I had a most convincing proof, having fished an entire day, wet throughout, and walked five miles afterwards, without catching cold, though we took no other precaution until the end of our walk.

A letter, of which the subjoined is a copy, has been sent me by the gentleman to whom it had been addressed ; I give it without note or comment :—

“ Stamer Park, Ennis, April 20th, 1838.

“ MY DEAR SIR—I find that O’Gorman is writing a treatise on angling, and has taken on himself to give prudential directions to

the lovers of that delightful sport. Now, you shall see how well-qualified this Nimrod of the rivers and lakes has proved himself to direct or advise. What I am about to state, has occurred within a few days, and to my own knowledge.

“He had killed a large salmon on the Upper Fergus, which encouraged him to put a boat on it; his first day in the boat was dead fine, yet he had not fished long when he rose a large salmon (not a breath of wind!). ‘Oh, said he, he wont take, but I will try him with a single-gut fly;’ on looking at which, he observed the noose a little faulty; the rower desired him to retie it;—‘No,’ said he, ‘if he even rises, he will not take,’ and down he threw the fly most exactly, and on raising his hand, had him fast. Away the fish went, showing himself, and shortly ran back. On wheeling up, the handle of the wheel turned on the axle,

and now he is regularly beat ; but he pulled in the line through the loops, which, when again running out, hitched ; the salmon sprang out of the water, unravelled the noose, and took away the fly, which a few rounds of silk would have saved, as the link was not broken, but slipt—and the top of the rod was also smashed on the occasion. Here is a fellow to talk of Franklin's advice ! Well, sir, the next day I met him with a broken rod, not spliced, only lapt together—the same wheel put in some way to rights. And here I must remark that he has two or three pet rods and wheels intended for an expedition somewhere that I can't guess at ; but away he went with a fry to look for pike, not a mortal with him, and he had not been long out, when he got hold of a very large salmon, which quickly abstracted about ten yards of his line, which was actually cut by an old top loop which he neglected re-

placing by a new one. The day after, I went with him, and rowed him up the river ; still the same lapt rod, the same wheel, but a new top loop, nothing but a salted fry for a bait. We had not got to the upper part of the river, when he called out—‘ I have him !’—thinking him a large pike ; but to my great delight, after a long race, it proved to be a very fine spring salmon, which we killed after great play. Then he says,—‘ If there is a salmon in this next ford, I will rise him with a fly ;’ which he did, but for want of wind, the fish would not take.

“ Now, sir, here is your famous angler, having good rods, using bad ones, not even spliced ; bad wheels, bad lines, old sharp top loops, from sheer laziness not even tying or even knotting the noose of his fly ; and I have learned from a bystander, that he lost, after sunset one day last week, another

large fish and his fly, by some like neglect. I request you may show this letter to Counsellor Henn, who will be sure to abuse him as he deserves ; and I hope you will not be wanting on the occasion ; to conclude, he is a very neglectful, careless angler, though possessing great perseverance, with a very impatient, bad temper : indeed, I think he is the worst tempered angler I ever met.

“ Believe me, my dear sir,

“ Yours truly,

“ M. FINUCANE.

“ The Hon. John Plunkett.”

The charge of ill-temper, I may hereafter refer to ; the rest of the statement I don't deny.

## CHAPTER IX.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPRING SALMON-FISHING, AND  
THE DIFFERENCE OF THROWING LARGE AND SMALL FLIES,  
ETC.

FOR the present I shall postpone my observations and instructions on spring salmon-fishing, giving, however, the following directions :—

If you fish with a very large fly, it will be exceedingly difficult to throw it with a strong wind in your favour, but easier against the wind. In the Shannon, you generally angle at a distance from land or trees, and the cotmen so arrange matters as to place you in the best position, as at Donass and Castleconnell, where you must single fish most of the rapids without



dragging. On this subject it is unnecessary to say more than that practice and dexterity are essential ; but fishing from the bank of a river is quite different. I have always, in throwing a large fly, gradually raised my hand, then with a sudden jerk raised the fly from the water, thrown it behind me quickly, but at the same time not letting the rod fall back too much ; then, when I judged that the fly had attained the full length of the line behind me as I have stated, I have thrown it quickly from my wrist, letting the rod droop sufficiently, but not too much to the water's edge. In this way I have thrown from thirty to thirty-five yards of line with a heavy fly attached.

The anglers on the Blackwater were often astonished at my' throwing further with a rod of eighteen feet than they could with one of twenty-six. Now for fishing under-

hand, which is a most excellent practice, particularly when you fish from a strand nearly level with the water, or from a bank free from bushes or trees : even among the latter I have often fished in that way when I dared not attempt throwing behind me. To throw in this way, you must always have the wind in your favour, or side, but not against you. When the fly nears the shore, raise your hand gradually till the fly is pretty nearly opposite you, then give the rod a whisk from your wrist, and the fly will go out beautifully ; but weak butts will not answer this work, nor can it be achieved with a very large fly, but with a middle-sized one. With a peal fly and trout flies of all kinds it may be done, and flies will crack or wear much less in this than the common way, and an immensely long line can be thrown when the wind is favourable.

I recollect angling for peal in the month

of June on the Blackwater, at Lismore, in company with a fisherman who had a very long rod, but who could not throw overhand so far as I did in the way I have described, and who then set about an imitation of my method, but at the third or fourth attempt, crash went his rod above the wheel.

I believe the reader will be of opinion that I have written enough on this subject ; yet much remains to be added, and I must say something on the different baits to be used for salmon, and their adjustment. The best are the loach, small trout gravelin, or parr and salmon fry.

Let your hook not be too large, but proportioned to the size of your bait, and the link well armed with slight copper or brass wire, properly softened in a turf fire : this precaution is necessary wherever pike abound, but nowhere else. Flatten a bit of a common pin from the point, tie it on the back of the

shank of your hook, and raise it a little ; it will keep your bait firm ; and, if pressed for time, or that you have quick sport, nothing more is necessary than having it properly curved, but not too much. I generally tie the bait on the bow of the hook with a little waxed silk thread, and, if I have time, fasten the head with the like material and a needle. I have occasionally used a second smaller sized hook, with a very short noose to slip down on the link, and put it through the head of the small fish to keep it firm, and have often hooked fish in this way, for they generally make at the head, particularly pike.

If your bait be too large, (and salmon seldom take an oversized one), do as I shall direct :—Cut off the head of your fry or trout ; shape it gradually, making it small in the shoulder and belly, taking out the entrails, but leaving the skin to sew over the hook, which must be of a correct size ;

then fasten again where the curve is in the bait, and let the link be moderately leaded, for salmon like their bait deep.

And now for two other most effective baits :—First, get a small or middle-sized silver eel, or small lamprey, if possible ; cut it to a proper length, to form what is called the tail of an eel ; cut some of the upper part away, but not the skin, which must be well tied to form the head ; let it be properly put on the hook, curved, and secured ; after which, get some strong silver tinsel or cord, begin at the head where it is to be tied, then cross it regularly on the body of the bait, till you knot and secure it on the bow of the hook. Sew a couple of silver spangles in the formed head as eyes, and put a few more between the crossings of the silver cord.

Here is a most splendid bait for salmon, pike, and I believe large trout ; for pike I

have tried it with the greatest success—this is a secret only fit for the *elite*.

I have before alluded, I believe, to the shrimp in its natural state, but to my great surprise have had great success with boiled ones for salmon ; they take them well in all running streams. The use of them is now interdicted in Galway.

I will now proceed to give some necessary sportsmanlike directions to my brother anglers. If, on any large river like the Shannon, you find a cot placed on the head of a course, or stream, with oars, paddles, rods, &c., presume not to fish that stream, as you may be sure it is engaged ; nor, I am convinced, will any gentleman, nor indeed the cotmen, do so, if your boat is similarly placed.

If you fish a river from the shore, don't interfere with any one who may be on a stream before you, but seek for an unoccupied one, or at least don't fish before any one

down the stream, but you may, if you choose, fish after him. Don't let any one walk before you ; always keep them behind you, and away from the bank. If you are troubled with a redundancy of troublesome frisky companions, take a worthless fly out of your book, and when well wetted make a good circular sweep with your rod pretty low among them, and you will shortly have hold of one of them in either coat, cravat, or pantaloons, or elsewhere : the hook must be then liberated somehow, if possible, after which, it is probable you may be left to your meditations.

If you fish a narrow river, don't allow any one to fish from the opposite side, if you are first on the reach or course. Suffer not dogs of any kind in your society while angling. Fish are not only sharp in sight, but in hearing, and much noise of any kind drives them to the bottom.

I will conclude this chapter with what may be termed ungenerous advice ; but as I have never met any angler of the Waltonian school, but, on the contrary, have witnessed much jealousy among sportsmen of all kinds, particularly adepts, I will feel no reluctance in expressing my sentiments on this momentous subject.

If you are of a party with experienced sportsmen, and that you rise a fish, call not out, “ *I riz him !* ” as was my habit, till my friend J. H. broke me off this ejaculation,—but keep your mind to yourself ; try everything in due course, and when all fails, you may then give your companion a trial ; or, if he rises a fish within your view, and that the dimpled water slightly shows his jealous fear, perhaps he may not see him, or be looking from the water ; it is then by no means necessary that you should make any observation, and it is more than



probable his next cast may be below him. You can wait until he passes on a good way, when it will be perfectly fair to take a turn at him with a fly a size or two less, or more or less gaudy than the one he showed to ; if, on the contrary, you fish with green-horns, or beginners, do all you can to show them sport—but have no commiseration for experienced hands—they have no pity for one another. What scenes of this kind I have witnessed ! and what delight we have had, after great fatigue, in acknowledging our misdeeds !

## CHAPTER X.

MY FIRST DAYS' SALMON-FISHING, ETC., ON THE SHANNON,  
AND ITS FURTHER CONTINUATION ON A SUBSEQUENT DAY  
ENDING DISASTROUSLY.

I HAVE been hitherto so black-letter, that I judge it necessary to diversify the scene, and will, therefore, describe my *debut* in salmon-fishing on that noble river, the Shannon, fearless of my friend J. H.'s taunts and allusions, who has, though unjustly, considered my relations as sometimes apocryphal.

At the time I am about to write of, I had many relatives living in Limerick, with one of whom I was on a visit. I was a good trout-fisher—could throw a line well and far—had killed a trout of six pounds weight, and had even fished a day creditably on the lake of Inchiquin—knew

something of cross-fishing, but as to mending a rod, tying a splice, or making a fly, was entirely helpless, and dependant on Corney, our fly-tier, already mentioned. It was, I think, on or about the 15th of February, I strolled up the banks of the Shannon, and had walked about two miles when I was stopped by a very large drain, at the other side of which was a high steep bank, partially planted with quicks. This was a boundary between two farms. You will soon perceive the reason of my being so particular: I was obliged to walk a considerable way round, before I could get across, after which I continued along the bank, till under Castle Troy, where I saw two men fishing in a boat, whom I hailed, and they very civilly came to shore. They were dragging for salmon—which mode of angling I must again explain.

The boat or cot is brought to the head

of a current, and the lines let out with flies or baits attached, viz., salmon fry, gravelin, or loach, commonly called callagh-roo. On this occasion, there were three very large ugly rods, great iron wheels, and very strong hempen lines, large flies tied on six or seven twisted gut. After the lines are at the designed length, the boat is rowed and paddled across the river, the fly or bait always dropping before the boat, the lines about the handles of the wheels, and every turn the boat drops down a little. In this mode of fishing you never see a salmon rise ; it is always a pull, and generally a very hard one. I asked to be taken on board.

“Can you play a salmon, or have you ever killed one ?”

“No ; but I am a good trout-fisher.”

“Well, come along. Will you pay your footing if you hook a fish ?”

“Certainly.”

“Can you row, as the current is strong?”

“Right well.”

“Will you take a fly, or the callagh?”

“The half-black and orange fly—I like the hook.”

“Very well ; take the right-hand oar.”

We had taken seven or eight crossings at hard work, and were feeling gloomy, when my rod got a pull that made it squeak, and the little pin the rod lay against was snapped, but before it was taken quite straight, I had it in hand.

“Don’t take the line off the handle till the rod is well bent.”

I obeyed orders.

“Now, my boy, see what you can do. I believe you have the old one !”

We made towards the shore—the fish showed, and appeared large, but very distant.

"Give me the rod, sir," said Darby Shaughnessy, brother to the famous Daniel—"the fish is large, and you may lose him."

I took from my pocket a half guinea, and put it on the seat of the boat, saying—

"If I lose him, take the half guinea."

"Done."

I stepped ashore, and set lugging at a famous rate: he ploughed across the stream, and showed himself at about seventy yards distance—put his broadside to the current, and down he went, followed close, and well held. I tried every way of turning him to no purpose. When—appalling sight!—the large ditch appeared in view, I called to the paddle-man—

"Run for your life—get round the ditch—I fear I can't cross it; and if he continues, all will go."

Nearer and nearer still! I was at last

obliged to step up the bank of the ditch—no drain at my side ; the leap was large, and no run ; I got my feet together among the quicks, tried again to turn him ; he was nearly striking fire out of the wheel, and part of the axle began to appear. I made a desperate effort, got one foot on the bank, the other went down—I was pulled on my face—not two yards of line on the wheel ; when the paddle-man came just in time, took me up, and saved all.

I had now tolerably fair play, and killed shortly after. He was a most lovely spring fish.

DARBY.—“ Sir, you behaved well. We would never have crossed that ditch. The fish is yours, though he were worth ten pounds.”

“ Very well—shan’t we go out again ?”

We fished for more than an hour after, but only met a poor slat. We then returned

to town, went into a shop, and weighed the fish I killed. It weighed *thirty-nine pounds* ; and though I have killed larger fish, I never saw such a beauty—it was very little more than a yard in length.

“ Well, Darby, don’t you think him cheap for half-a-guinea ?” To the shopman — “ What is salmon a pound ?”

“ Two shillings.”

“ No matter, sir,” said Darby, “ you are welcome to him.”

“ No, Darby, I won’t take your salmon, and here is my footing,”\* giving him five shillings ; “ but I must get the fly,” which I took with much pride.

I was now entered, and quite proud of the skill and decision I evinced, and next day set about my future appointments.

Passing by a watchmaker’s shop, my at-

\* A fine imposed when you kill your first fish on any lake or river.



tention was attracted by a very handsome large wheel, of a peculiar construction ; it had a click at one side, and the handle at the other, in what I thought an awkward place. On asking an explanation, I was told it was a multiplier, and its various qualities were so enlarged on, that I purchased it at a very dear rate. I then bought a fine, well-varnished rod, and a very strong silk line, got flies from the famous Daniel Shaughnessy, and engaged his brother Ned, and Jack Kean, a famous angler and boatman, (my friend Darby, who took a great liking to me, having been taken ill.) His hooks were of the finest shape, and to that kind of shape I have invariably adhered—round in the bow, and straight in the point. He tied an excellent fly, full as killing, but not so nice to the eye as those of his brother Daniel. In two or three days we were on one of the best drags on the river, the wind

fair, the day good—but it turned out a day of disaster.

We commenced on a reach called Ilane-a Roan, or the Seal Island, (where one of those animals was shot, in the act of eating a salmon,) and had not fished long when one of our three rods had a hard pull. I must observe that Kean had provided two rods, wheels, and lines, and I had my late purchased tackle in what I thought nice order. We had two very large flies, a callagh or loach on one of the rods, and six twist gut to all, it being early in the season, and the water very high and rapid.

We were getting to the shore quickly with the fish that was hooked, when the callagh had a pull, and I had my second fish, which turned out to be a pike of about ten pounds weight. I held him with my left hand, but he shortly got off, cutting the link as effectually as if a razor had been

applied to it. We got in, and I shortly killed the salmon, a spring fish, of about twelve pounds.

By some awkwardness in wheeling up too tight, the rod was broken near the first joint of the top, and the salmon hooked in the tongue. I called to Kean for a knife, having forgot my own. His reply was—"We always, when fishing for ourselves, have every thing, but for gentlemen have only rods and lines." No knife had he or his comrade, nor could we extricate the fly; I then desired Ned Shaughnessy to go and get a knife at a neighbouring cabin; he was away nearly half-an-hour, and then returned with a most wretched implement, which, at most, would only cut out the fly, but as to splicing, it was out of the question, and I was no adept; here, then, was one rod *hors de combat*.

Out we went again, with two flies, nor

had we made many turns, when my beautiful rod got a drag, that made every loop in it sing, and I had firm a most enormous spring fish. We, as usual, made for the shore, my beast leading quietly until I got in, when I set about butting in prime style; away he went down and across for a considerable distance, then doubled against the stream, and began to get slack; I wheeled up very quickly, until the weight came on my "multiplier," and then one yard I could not get up. At this time, a malignant grin passed over the stern phiz of Kean. I made another effort to wheel up, with all the force I could employ, when smash went the multiplying machinery. I then dragged down the line quickly through the loops, and had my fish under the bow of the rod, but he came to the surface, ploughed across the current, took the line on his back, and away he went. My line ran out fairly for a time,

but at last hitched in the loops, two or three of which gave ; the line would not run ; it twisted up, my rod snapped in the butt, about a foot and a-half from the wheel, and my brute got off, taking about forty yards of line. He was one of the largest salmon I ever saw.

“ I knew,” said Kean, “ what the multiplying wheel would do.”

“ But,” replied I, “ did you know what the rod you persuaded me to buy, with its fine spring in the butt, would do ?”

“ Well, sir, we have another rod, and I advise you to put up the fly you killed the large salmon at Castle Troy with.”

“ No, I wont ;—this is an unlucky day.”

“ Well, sir, come and throw the Garrison, (about a half-mile from where we were fishing) with the large blue fly.”

To it we went, and, being well-directed, I fished tolerably. We caught a small slat,

which I was disposed to throw out again, but no mercy was shown, lest it should continue the bad luck, and I soon after got hold of a very nice fish, about fourteen pounds weight, got to shore, and managed him well. While I was playing him, a Captain Cotter came to the bank, attended by about a-half score of dogs, grey-hounds and pointers. He was a great angler, but had been disabled by a wound in a duel with Mr. Richard Harrison, which arose out of a difference about the right of fishing a stream on which his cot had been first placed, and in which he was undoubtedly in the right, though the fortune of war declared against him. Well, we got in the salmon with some difficulty, the gaff having slipped out of the handle, and the fish was getting out again, when all parties hastened to intercept him; the rod was thrown down, the dogs got entangled with the line, the hook was broken in the salmon's

jaw, the line snapped in three or four places, and, to crown all, the rod smashed nearly in pieces. Here followed confusion, cursing, swearing, kicking dogs, damning, openly and mentally, our visitor and his companions.

I was now reduced to Darby's fly, and though the captain offered his knife to set us to rights, I declined any more fishing, perfectly convinced of its being one of the "*dies nefasti*."

I must now moralize, and follow the example of those great generals who have endeavoured to account for their disasters. In the first place, I should have had a good knife, wax, silk, and some slight whip-cord ; in the next, my bait-link should have been armed with fine wire, well softened, and then I should not have lost the pike ; my silk-line should have been well stretched and pulled ; and if all had been so, it is more

than probable that I might have caught the large salmon. But the worst thing I had done was to purchase a rod with what is called a "fine spring in the butt," and a multiplying wheel—one of the most accursed inventions that was ever thought of, unless for pinkeens or fry.

In what I have written thus hurriedly, though there is much of mere detail, there is also warning instruction.



## CHAPTER XI.

DIRECTIONS FOR TYING SALMON FLIES, AND THE DIFFERENT METHODS, PARTICULARLY FOR THE SHANNON.

I HAVE said so much on the subject of spring salmon-fishing, that I must be again practical ; and as an angler is, like other men, liable to many casualties, such as the loss of fly-books and boxes, or leaving some behind altogether, and thus often finding himself, after long journeys, without a great part of his tackle ; and deeply considering how expedient it is that the necessary knowledge how to provide against these possible exigencies, should be in some degree obtained, I shall proceed to direct how, under these various circumstances, salmon flies of all kinds and sizes may be tied, particularly those most in

favour on the Shannon, Fergus, Suir, Nore, Lee, &c. and which are also good on the other rivers of our island.

I suppose you provided (for if you are not, you ought to be,) with the following materials :—

Floss silks, orange, yellow, purple, black, light and dark blue, and pea and dark green colours.

Twisted silks, and the twist outwards, (that is, to your right) of the above colours, except black, (which is not fit for tying,) gold and silver tinsel of different breadths, to match the size of the fly, and gold and silver cord of various thicknesses.

Gold, or Chinese pheasant feathers, viz. top-knots, breast feathers, spotted tail feather, and the various other feathers of this beautiful bird, all of which are more or less necessary for a fly tier.

Macaw tail feathers, one side blue, the

other yellow ; the red macaw tail feather very good ; good guinea-hen and brown turkey tail feather, spotted peacock feather ; the green-fibred feather lying along the back of the bird, and its fine breast feather, which is most useful for small salmon flies, and for many trout flies ; there is scarcely a feather on the peacock that is not of more or less use for salmon, trout, or pike flies.

Of mohairs, or furs, (by which I mean dyed pig's fur) you must have various shades, yellow, green, orange, dark and light blue, browns of various shades, blacks, purples, &c.

Let your hooks be filed rather flat on the inside and outside of the shank, and the end of the shank a little turned up, as in the Limerick method, to prevent the link being cut; and insist that your directions on this point be obeyed by your hook-maker ; but be never unprovided with a couple of half-round

fine-cut files, with which you can flatten the inside and outside of the shanks of any hooks which you may be obliged to make use of, and which are not finished in the way above directed; but make no attempt to turn up the shank of a tempered hook—it will break off.

If you use twisted links, take care that the twist of the link agrees with that of your wheel-line and casting-line.

Have a large sheet of paper, or a newspaper, on which lay out the different materials necessary for the day's tying; clip your heckles a little at each side of the point, but don't cut the quill-feather of the heckle; the Limerick fly-tiers strip down one side of the fibre of the heckle—I do not; but this is a matter of taste. And now, attention :—here goes for magpie fly.

First, arm your link far enough, but not too far; leave as much of the shank of the

hook, according to its size, as you may consider sufficient for the chief part of the wing, without tying ; always tie your links under, and not over the shank ; open a little of the link, which I will suppose three twist, and bite it, to make it lie flat, then tie it firmly so high as opposite the barb of the hook ; fasten some white tinsel, which roll three or four times round the hook, no higher than I have desired ; take some yellow floss silk, fasten, roll that also as you did the tinsel round the hook three or four times, and close to the tinsel, and fasten. Note, that instead of fastening with knots, turning the silk you are tying with under the shank of the hook answers just as well, and is not so clumsy, and on every occasion as you proceed the silk can be raised from under the shank of the hook. Next, get a gold pheasant top-knot, which put on, minding the bend of the feather, and that it sits

exactly to your taste, which latter is called the jib. Next, put on a black heckle, prepared as I have directed, a few lines back ; then put on some gold cord ; next, some white tinsel, broad or narrow, according to the size of the fly, and on all these occasions if every thing is not ready to your hand, or that you have any thing to look for, turn in as directed under the shank of the hook till you are ready to proceed. You next put on some black floss silk ; run your tying silk half way down to where you commenced tying, and turn under the shank ; then lap your black floss silk half way down, take up your tying silk, fasten and turn in ; get some orange floss silk, fasten, and again run down your tying silk to where you had first commenced tying on your hook, but no lower, fasten and turn in ; then put four rows of tinsel round your body, fasten and turn in ; then put four rows of the gold cord

before, and close to your tinsel, secure as usual ; then put on your heckle, always before and close under your gold cord, to the end of the fly, and fasten, and turn in ; all this constitutes the tail and body of your fly.

Then to form your wing ;—take two gold pheasant-breast feathers, of a size proportioned to the size of the hook, put them together, with the darker sides face to face, and the bright side of each out. If the fly is very large, you must add proportionably to the size of the wing with either gaudy feathers of some kind or good dyed heckles, and in all instances fasten well and take care that the wing sits properly without twisting ; you next take a right-handed jay blue feather, strip down the dark side, (some split the feather altogether) cut off some of the fibres of the slight end, but not the little quill ; roll it round the butt of the wing as

far as it will go without being too coarse. To finish the fly, get two fibres of blue macaw, of a length sufficient to project beyond the wing of your fly, and with these mix a due proportion, to fit at each side of the fly, of some guinea-hen, tail pheasant, grey peacock, or good turkey feather, fasten, then break well some dark blue mohair, twist it well on the silk, and put on three or four turns ; after which take a pin, separate, and double down the macaw strips and their accompaniments, and knot three times between them and the jay heckle : this is a very generally good fly, wherever I have angled.

The Limerick method of tying is, in some degree, different ; and of their mode of tying I purpose writing next ; but from this chapter may be formed an idea of the way in which all silk-bodied flies are tied.



The Limerick fly tiers, in the first instance, before they commence, have the wing for each fly well wetted, so that they may adhere together, and thus the due proportions for each side of the fly are preserved. For instance, two large pheasant feathers are drawn through the lips, and placed correctly side to side, the bright sides out ; next, equal quantities of either dyed heckles, gaudy feathers, spotted peacock, turkey, or any other they fancy, are attached in equal quantities to each side, and on each occasion they draw the wing through their lips, so that it may adhere firmly together : in this way I have often seen ten or twelve wings laid out on a table, and their jibs, tails, &c. placed in a very orderly manner. This is a quick way, particularly if you have a judicious assistant ; but their flies are clumsy about the head, which must be the case, from the wing first being left lying down along the link

till the entire body, tail, &c. are tied on, when the wing is to be doubled up, and well tied, after which the jay heckle, side feathers, and head are to be added.

They are also very particular in the neatness of their silk-bodied flies, and seldom use any other, nor can they tie a rough-bodied fly well, when they attempt it ; they make it unnecessarily thick and coarse. These remarks I have considered expedient to make before proceeding further.

If you tie with untwisted silk, which must be doubled or trebled, always twist your silk out from you, (that is, to the right,) before you wax it : and this caution cannot be too often repeated, being of the utmost importance, as there is scarcely a doubt that either the head, body, or tail of your fly, or sometimes the entire, may consist of fur, or mohair, which is always twisted on the silk in the way I describe, in order

to be laid on the hook ; for if your silk is twisted in, and your fur or mohair out, the consequence will be, that your silk will lose the wax, and your fur or mohair will not stick to it. But to return to the Limerick method.

First arm your link, taking care that it lies properly under the shank, of which you are not to leave so much untied as in the way first described,—say as much as will suffice for the side feathers and head. Then after two or three turns on the hook, put on the principal part of the wing, the butt, or thick part, lying towards the bow of the hook : the wing mixed according to your fancy and the size of the hook. Tie the wing well and fast on the shank of the hook, tie down the said wing slightly with the silk you commenced with on the link, and after a few turns leave it so, taking care that when wanted it may be long enough

to finish the fly. Next, if there should be any superfluous thickness about the butt of the wing next the bow of the hook, cut it off, then take another piece of waxed silk, with which you are to commence again at the butt of your wing, and continue tying up until you come opposite the beard of the hook ; after which put on tinsel or cord for the first part of the tail ; then silk, mohair, or fur, well twisted on the silk, of whatever kind you like : then your jib,—either top-knot, or breast feather, pheasant mixed with parrot feather, and a few strips of guinea-hen or widgeon : in all you will be led by your judgment or fancy. You then put on your heckle, twist, tinsel and body, as heretofore directed, after which run down the silk you were last tying with to where you began to fasten on your wing, then roll on the body, and fasten. Put on the tinsel, four or five rows of which are sufficient ;

then the twist or cord, before and close to every row of tinsel ; after which lay on your heckle before and close under your cord, and then fasten and cut off any of the tying silk that remains.

You must now loosen the silk you had tied down with at first, double up the wing, holding it closely between your forefinger and thumb, and keeping it even till you tie it well and fast ; then put on a jay heckle or not, as you fancy. The jay feather will hide much of the clumsiness of the fly. You then put on your side feathers, a strip of macaw, mixed with brown pheasant tail, guinea-hen, widgeon, or any other kind you fancy, at each side of the fly ; and, to finish, twist as much broken mohair on your silk as will form the head ; take a pin, and double down the side feathers where the head is put on, and knot, as before directed, between the side feathers and the jay heckle.

Black ostrich feather does very well for the heads of middle-sized and small or peal flies.

You will perceive that the Limerick method is a very firm one. You have the two methods, and, *utrum horum &c.* take your choice; for in either of these two ways all salmon and peal flies, big and little may be tied, observing that the thickness of the tying silk must be proportioned to the size of the fly, and that any colour, whether black, blue, purple, green and orange, or entire orange, or even furs of various shades may be substituted, viz., greens, light and dark, green olives, and brown olives of various shades, fiery browns, and cinnamons.

These latter descriptions are usually tied less gaudily than the silk ones, often with turkey feathers, or brown mallard wing only, and very little parrot or pheasant feather,

even in the jib, and they often tell, when fish will not show to a gaudy fly.

For the present I will drop the practical ; and, having promised some Shannon anecdotes, I purpose giving a description of two or three good fishing days on that river.

## CHAPTER XII.

## SOME GOOD FISHING DAYS ON THE SHANNON.

I HAD by the time I am about speaking of—the season after that already alluded to—become quite a proficient, but still dependent on the fly-tiers ; I had been in Dublin, from whence I returned on a 15th of March, very well provided with gut, a good wheel, and good silk lines ; and the day after went very early to Mr. Dan Shaughnessy, and desired him to show me the sized hook then fished with, which he did.

I then insisted that he should make me four hooks two sizes less ; when the following dialogue took place.

DAN.—“ Why, sir, these hooks will be too small, and they will float like corks.”



O'G.—“ Don't mind that ; I will pay you well, and you must do as I desire.”

The hooks were made and turned.

O'G.—“ Now, Mr. Dan, give me the plyers,” which, on getting, I immediately applied to shaping the hooks my own way—perfectly straight from the bow down to the point, and the beard projecting very little. Dan declared they were the ugliest looking hooks he ever saw. They were tempered, pulled, and tried.

DAN.—“ Now, sir, what kind of flies will you have ?”

O'G.—“ First, a black fly, with a deep yellow heckle.”

DAN.—“ Such a fly was never tied.”

O'G.—“ Don't mind that ; it must be tied now, and on the least of the four hooks. Next, an orange coloured fly, with a green silk tail, black heckle ; next, a magpie, half black, half orange ; next, a black fly, with

an orange head—all with top knots ; butterflies, dyed heckles, and jay cravats." I stuck to Dan until all were completed.

The next day was Patrick's day, and Dan was perfectly prepared for the celebration of the festival, it being quite useless to expect boat or boatmen, so that the fishing was put off to the 18th, and directions given to have a cot stationed before day on a large reach, called the tail of the lough.

We were out about eight in the morning: three excellent rods, the lines run out and well stretched, when Jack Kean, my chief boatman, requested that I would wheel up the lines, and then walked deliberately to the river. I asked what he was about, when he replied, that he was going to shave himself ; and so he did, having lathered himself with a boiled potato—and, such a razor ! By the time the operation was over

his face was scarified like a crimped salmon. When he saw my flies, he regarded them with the utmost contempt, declaring that they were much too small and light, and offering one or two of his own, which I rejected.

We then commenced ; the wind lying beautifully against the stream. We had taken many turns without success, and Kean was growling, and asking to put up larger flies.

I remained obstinate, though getting low spirited ; when, casting my eyes down the stream, I saw, at about thirty yards from the boat, a large salmon rise. This circumstance could not be observed by Kean, his back being turned to the place the fish had risen in. Very soon after another, and another, in the same line. I said nothing, but was anxiously watching the time when, as I should judge, the flies might get among them, when Kean cried

out, "You have him, sir!" We went ashore, and killed him rather easily. He was over thirty pounds weight. We had scarcely been out again, when we had two together; both large fish, which Kean and I killed. Out again, and not half way across, another, which we killed. In short, before three o'clock we had eight very large salmon killed, and had not lost one: the black fly with the yellow heckle having done more than its share.

We were now joined by Captain Cotter, of whom I have already spoken, and with whom I had made acquaintance. He insisted that we should go to a neighbouring house to lunch. This I objected to, though I was not at the time very knowing, for he did it for the purpose of taking me off the reach, and having it for himself the next day; but go we did, and staid more than an hour—I then insisted on returning.

When the captain saw my flies, he offered to back the black and orange, and the orange fly, half-a-crown each, against the yellow heckle fly. I took him up on each. Kean whispered to me, "Sir, there is no click to your new wheel, and it runs smooth and silent, so let out a little more line, that your fly may be a little below the other." I did as directed, and caught two more large fish. We had now ten ; when it was proposed to fish the next stream, a very rapid one, called Poul a Herra. Here I was obliged to take the second oar, but keeping my yellow heckle fly still near me.

We had made several turns, and could scarcely keep the boat against the stream, when my rod had a tremendous pull. I instantly shipped my oar, and found, from the weight and strength of the fish that he must be very large. We, as usual, went to shore, at the Clare side of the Shannon,

and, after about twenty minutes' hard and fatiguing play, he showed enormous : he was a new run fish, not long in the river. I brought him within reach of the gaff, when Kean made an attempt at him, and only scraped his back ; away then he went across. We were again obliged to take to the cot, and follow him to the other side, and bring him back again, the banks at the Limerick side being high, and it being highly dangerous to attempt to gaff him into the cot in deep water. We at length killed him. He weighed forty-eight and a-half pounds, and was the largest salmon I ever killed, though I have hooked much larger. Captain Cotter, in the month of May following, killed, with a fly on three-twist gut, on the stream of Donass, a salmon fifty-nine pounds weight : he was turning a little brown, but was a splendid fish. We then made another turn with much dif-

ficulty, and I killed another salmon with my fly, and the only small one we had, about eleven or twelve pounds weight.

This was the greatest day's fishing I ever witnessed. I have killed more salmon in a day ; but to kill twelve, and no more hooked, without a single loss,—of those, one of the weight I mention, three from thirty to thirty-five pounds weight, and all with one exception large fish,—was, I believe, an occurrence in angling seldom paralleled : they were all spring fish, quite fresh run.

It was now late ; no possible way of bringing home our fish but by water. We went down the river to the salmon weir, and having given some of the watchmen half-a-crown, got a basket taken up, (there was no gap in the weir open on this day,) and got safe to Ball's bridge. Cotter got three salmon, the cotman three more. Cotter lost eight half-crowns. I brought in six

enormous fish to my relation's house, and so this unexampled day's sport ended.

During the entire season I continued salmon-fishing the Fergus, and the Shannon particularly ; and, having permission to fish most parts of it from the upper fall of Castleconnell, the streams of Donass, and all the other streams to the salmon weir, had often very great sport. I killed at Donass, under Sir Hugh Massy's, with whom I was always very intimate, a salmon of forty-five pounds weight, and another of forty-two, and several others of various sizes.

In the commencement of the peal season (peal, we called the late run that came in the latter end of May, June, July, and August, and some very large fish sometimes accompanied them) I became acquainted with a young gentleman of the name of Furnel Tomkins. He was a most capital trout and peal fisher, and possessed a qualifi-



cation which I wanted—that of being able to hold a cot in a very rapid stream, and to use the paddle ; I could row and fish, but no more ; so that we could be of mutual assistance to each other, and we often hired or took away a cot without any other assistant, and had excellent sport each time.

It was about the 25th of June when a great fall of rain took place, and the river about Limerick was quite dirty. We met, and a walk up the banks of the canal was agreed on. At the head of it was a boat, with poles, oars, and paddle, and no one in it. We walked a small distance up the banks of the river from the canal, when, the sun suddenly emerging from a cloud, we saw that no more than half the river was muddy, and that it was a partial flood from Anacotty river. We had neither rods nor gaff, but I had a pocket full of flies of all kinds, big and little.

"Now," said Furnel, "let us take the boat at the head of the canal, and go over to Wray's (one of the fishermen) and we can get a rod and gaff there."

Away with us across ; there was no one at Wray's but a little boy : we took his rod, wheel, and line, but the gaff was not to be found. Notwithstanding this off we set to the head of the "Garrison." The cot was well held, and at the second cast I had hold of a fish more than ten pounds weight. We endeavoured to get him into the cot, and were so intent on our sport that we did not perceive that we had drifted considerably ; but we had a good strand not far off, and we got him in, and immediately resumed our position. The next fish was a large brown salmon, which took fly and casting line, but I was well appointed, and was at work very shortly. Not a throw, between the clean and dirty water, that did not give

us hold of a peal, a trout, or a large salmon ; the latter gentlemen we did not wish to deal with, as the rod was not large, and rather limber, but the line was strong and good, and did very well till the big lads cut us against the rocks, and in this way most of our flies were vanishing. The casting-lines were gone pretty early, and, piece by piece, many yards of the silk line. We played the fish by turns, and were most heartily tired. When it was my companion's turn, the rod was handed him on reaching the shore.

We had, about six in the evening, the cot nearly full of salmon, peal, and trout ; but we were broken merchants, only one large spring-fly on five-gut, and no more line than twice the length of the rod out of the bare axle.

"Come home," said Tomkins.

"No," replied I ; "give me one throw at the big rock."

"Why?" said he; "sure you must be mad—you have not eight yards of line."

"No matter," said I, "let us be broken altogether."

He laughed. "Here goes," said he—"and that you may be pulled into the water!" And up he brought me to the spot I wished.

The fly was scarcely on the water, when a salmon, which, I am convinced, was over forty pounds, came up, head and tail, and swallowed my fly. I struck him most violently. He took the little rod straight from me, pulled me down in the cot, and took the line from the axle.

We brought home twenty-three peal; seven large salmon, one of twenty-five pounds weight; and lost nearly two dozen salmon flies, large and small. We had also eleven fine trout,—none exceeding three pounds. If we had our own tackling it would have been one of the greatest day's

sport ever witnessed any where. There was not a single fisherman this day on the river, as they imagined that a Shannon flood had taken place, so we had it all to ourselves. It is remarkable that on this day we did not lose a single fish for want of the gaff, though the delay and labour were certainly very great.

## CHAPTER XIII.

STROAKALL FISHING, AND SUDDEN IMMERSION OF THE PRINCIPAL PERFORMER, WITH SOME NOTICE OF FLIES NOT HITHERTO TREATED OF.

I HAD fished the Shannon from the upper part of Castleconnell to the salmon weir, in every way ; had trolled, dragged, hand-fished, and cross-fished, when the water became low. In this last way of angling our sport was but indifferent : our cross-lines were heavy, with coarse links, and we often lost many flies, from having sometimes three or four salmon and peal together ; in short, in the vulgar phrase, we made no hand of it, chiefly from a want of that proficiency to which I afterwards attained.

I had heard of stroakalls, and I longed

for a trial of this mode of taking salmon. I went to my friend Daniel Shaughnessy, and directed that he should make me a very small one, with not much larger hooks than those usually fished with in the early spring. "Now a regular stroakall consists of three immense hooks, as big as small gaffs, tied back to back, and leaded, that they should sink." Mine were small, and also leaded, but could be thrown by a strong spring rod.

It was about the 20th of May, when returning from the falls of Donass, after indifferent sport, that I ordered the cot to be stopped at a large deep stream, also called Poul a Herra, (nearly four miles distant from that on which I had caught the large salmon,) and took the stroakall out of a box. Kean at first refused to be accessory to the proceeding at all, but after much persuasion agreed to direct me, par-

ticularly as there was no other cot in view. I had my best and largest rod.

“Now, sir, throw it into the eddy, and when you feel it has touched the bottom make a drag with the point of the rod close to the water, and across the eddy, but you will break your rod—it is a wattle; and it is a strong cord and much larger hooks you should have; but never mind—try your fortune.”

Well, out the stroakall, such as it was, went, many salmon at this time rising in every part of this very rapid current; for about that time of the year those salmon which had been hooked, or had flies left in them, dropt into this great reservoir, where a salmon is scarcely ever got hold of with a fly. My first and second attempt failed. I then stuck in a rock, from whence the stroakall was disengaged with much difficulty. I was tired, and had a mind to give



over, when I made one passionate snap, and succeeded in hooking a most enormous fish. He sprang about a foot high, and went ploughing like a horse, for three or four yards, through the current. "By G—!" cried Kean, "he has a king-fish—he may as well think to kill a whale with his rod!" I endeavoured to hold the line with all my strength, when, whether from having slipt in the boat, or from the prodigious size and strength of the fish, I was pulled on my head into the water. We were at this time alongside a large rock, well moored; and Kean instantly seized me by the skirts of my coat, and helped me into the boat. I had not parted the rod, but the line ran out to a great extent. As soon as I shook myself, and recovered a little, I set about wheeling up, but salmon and stroakall were fast among the rocks. We went to the off-side; tried every thing—all to no purpose,

and finally left about twenty yards of the line below. What became of the fish we could never learn, nor would Kean be persuaded that it was a salmon ; he said that he recollected seeing another king-fish in one of the falls of Donass, where there could be no chance of either holding or following him, and that no one would attempt to look for him. Could it have been a sturgeon ? I had not time to judge of its length, but it was about three feet broad, for I saw its side.

In the month of April, previous to the event I have described, on a stream a little above the salmon-weir, I got hold of a most enormous salmon with a fly, and I think I should have killed him if I had been kept over him, but we as usual went ashore in Thomass Island, and no persuasion could induce my cotmen to keep over the fish ; though I repeatedly warned them to do so,

their reply always was, "You are strong enough." After a considerable pulling match he made up and across the river, fastened the line among the rocks, showed at about eighty yards distance, and smashed all. We saw him plainly ; I think he was nearly five feet in length, and had been some time in the river, for he was turning a little brown.

It is to be remarked, that salmon some time from the sea, are much more difficult to kill than the fresh run ones ; but in all cases when large fish are hooked, the cot should be kept near or over them for a considerable time before getting to shore ; but nothing can equal the obstinacy of the Shannon cotmen.

I have now described my first and last essay in stroakall work ; it appears I had got enough of it : and there being two or three very particular flies to be noticed,

I will give a description of them, as well as of the manner of having my own very particular costly flies tied. One of those I have not yet noticed is called the gold-finch : the body is either entire yellow, or generally black, with a yellow heckle, gold pheasant topping in the tail for a jib, and the entire wing, except the side feathers, composed of gold pheasant toppings. This is a very extravagant fly even now, and was much more so at the time to which my relations refer. My way of getting this kind of fly tied was in some degree more economical. As in the Limerick way, so here I began with having two breast pheasant-feathers tied down, for the wing ; then, after putting on the tinsel for the tail, I put on my top-knot for the jib, first arming the butt of the feather carefully. I then put on a rough orange or yellow mohair tail, tied on the body, tinsel, and heckle, as heretofore di-

rected ; then doubled up the wing, and put at each side of it a fine topping, also well armed ; taking care that the curve in each topping should incline to the other, and project a little beyond the wing ; after which I put on the side feathers and head, having previously tied on a jay heckle, as before observed. In this way there was a saving of half a dozen top-knots at least ; and I have no doubt of its being a better fly than the entire yellow—in fact, I found it to be so by experience.

The Limerick anglers thought more of the top-knots than of any other feather, and if not well watched, would cut them out very quickly : of this offence I will acquit my chief cotman Kean, though I have suffered from some others. Poor Kean died a short time ago, in the latter part of 1843. Lord Elliot's fishery act broke his manly heart.

I must notice the large grouse Lochaber, which is excellent as soon as the water falls sufficiently. The grouse feathers which are best, and have the longest fibre, lie down the back, along the wing and to the tail. You adapt the feather to the size of the hook, the earlier the season, of course the bigger the fly ; you tie up your hook, put on whatever tail and jib you like, (a top-knot is the most generally used,) after which you take the grouse feather, holding the small end in your left hand, and softly and smoothly bending down the fibre to your right ; you then fasten it under the jib, after which you put on gold or silver cord, next the body, yellow, orange, green, or purple. You then run down your tying-silk, and turn it under the shank of the hook ; next lay on your body nice and smoothly, fasten, and turn in ; then put on five rows of the gold cord, which also fasten ; after which take

your grouse feather carefully, and put a turn very close under the gold cord, and a couple of turns additional (if the feather allows it, near the head), always minding the sit of the feather, and turning it in your fingers until the different fibres incline as they ought to do, towards the tail of the fly. You then fasten your feather ; take a pin, and divide the feather exactly, so that one part will lie on the back, the other half on the belly of the fly, which latter part is intended to represent its feet, and which you cut to a proper length, say a quarter of an inch near the head, and about half that length towards the tail.

You will now perceive there is not wing enough : take a gold pheasant breast feather of a sufficient length of fibre, and strip down as much at each side as will suffice to render the wing full enough, which you

will fasten, and be exact ; after which put on macaw, guinea-hen, and brown pheasant-tail feathers at each side, in equal proportions, with black ostrich or blue mohair head ; then turn down your side feathers, knot between them and the wing,—and your fly is finished.

Three seasons did I fish the Shannon and the Fergus, and numbers of anecdotes could I relate of what occurred to me on those noble rivers ; but for the present I take my leave of salmon-fishing, intending again to recur to it, it being, to use Colonel Hankey's most appropriate phrase, "the fox-hunting of fishing."

During this entire time (though I have written so much on fly-tying) I could neither tie a fly, nor assist myself in any arrangement necessary for an angler. I could, it is possible, tie a hook on a link, or make a clumsy splice on a line, but



beyond that, was a dependant on the time or caprice of Daniel Shaughnessy, or some other operator in his way. Various disappointments at last threw me on my own resources, but not for a considerable time afterwards.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ON TROUT-FISHING—DESCRIPTION OF THE LAKES FORMED BY THE FERGUS—APATHY OF THE GENTRY—SIZE OF RODS, WHEELS, AND LINES—THEIR KINDS AND PROPORTIONS—IZAAC WALTON'S MORALIZING REFLECTIONS—STORY OF A BET, ETC.

HAVING said so much on salmon-fishing, I next apply myself to giving the fullest instructions for trout-angling, which is a part of the science fully as exciting to an angler as any other ; and as I have been from my youth fishing the different lakes formed by the Fergus, and as the description of fish contained in all these lakes is of the most superior kind, I hope it will not be thought amiss if I enter a little into detail in following the course of this charming river.

The Fergus takes its rise from a lake

of the same name lying about four miles to the west of Inchiquin, which abounds with small and middle-sized trout, not more than from a pound to two pounds weight. After flowing about two miles it becomes subterranean, and re-appears at a place called Clab, from whence it flows by Elmvale, the seat of Mr. O'Brien, to Kilnaboy, where it is a considerable river, and where the trout are from two to six or eight pounds weight ; from thence to the Lake of Inchiquin, one of the most charming and picturesque spots in Ireland for its size ; from thence, by the mills of Clifden, to Corofin. Before reaching this village it receives a considerable mountain stream, after which it forms the lake of Tedane, where there are immense trout, and of the finest kind ; from thence, by Kells and various passages, to a lake called Ballytigue, and lake Virna, where the run of trout are

still larger ; thence on by Adroon (where Mayree river joins it) to the different lakes of Dromore ; then, by Drumconora, to Fountain lake and Ballyally—all of them, lakes formed by the Fergus, the course of which is invariably through limestone ground, and the bottoms for the most part gravel, marl, or sand, with the richest weeds and abundance of rocks. It necessarily follows that the fish must be perfectly well fed. I have more than once killed a trout not more than sixteen inches in length, weighing four pounds ; and killed one of twenty-two inches in length, weighing seven pounds. But with what heart-felt regret am I called on to state, that all these charming lakes and rivers are destroyed by a general system of poaching, even under the eye of gentlemen living on their borders : by set-nets, eel-nets, spearing in winter, by ducks suffered to eat the spawn, by permission to

idle persons (who would be much better employed in attending to their work) to keep boats and angle. There is scarcely a day there are not three or four, nay, six or eight boats on Inchiquin, which is not more than five miles in circumference, busily employed in poaching. Talk of Connemara! not one of its lakes would be comparable to Inchiquin, if it were one-tenth as well preserved. But as I purpose giving an account of my different trips to Mayo and Connemara, I will cease to digress, and endeavour to describe the best means of taking the fish in these lakes, premising that my directions will be found equally applicable to most of the lakes in Ireland; for I am really of opinion that the flies used on Inchiquin, Tedane, and Dromore will answer perfectly well for all the other lakes; and will be, perhaps, found the best, not only for trout, but even for salmon, when they have been

a little time from the sea. I will now proceed to practical particulars, and begin with the tackle which I consider proper for Inchiquin, Tedane, and Dromore.

The rod, two-piece, (the butt a little longer than the top part,) about fourteen or fourteen and a-half feet in length ; the tying splice long and blunt. If not two-piece, I would recommend four, with sockets in the English way : the wheel invariably one foot from the extreme butt. The loops tolerably strong and large, and running along the edge of the splice, which is the strongest way. The wheel high, and only an inch or very little more in width, and perfectly plain, without click. The handle strong, and of one solid piece, without revolving brass or ivory—which is absurd. The line, well-oiled silk, of a thickness proportioned to the fine part of the top. Mr. J. H. prefers nine hair lines, which are

more lively, but can't be depended on for large fish, and are apt to catch in weeds, which abound in these lakes, so much so, that it is right in some places to fish with but a single fly. Put a link of nice three-twist gut to the end of your wheel-line, twisted the same way, and noosed (I hate large clumsy knots) ; another link of twisted gut to the head of your casting-line, which should be at least nine feet in length : your links attached together with single knots, and the ends tied down, and nicely varnished over the tyings—in this way, if necessary, the casting-line may be wheeled into the loops without danger, whereas in the common way of knotting, if a knot should get inside the loops, it is more than probable it may not run out without your losing the fish, breaking the casting-line, or smashing the top of the rod on a short bend. Be particularly cautious on this

point when you take a fish into the net, and immediately pull out some of the line ; you may thus save your top, which might be otherwise broken.

In case of wet weather, as I have before directed, have a piece of sponge to fit above the wheel, which will prevent the entrance of water into your sleeves. Be always provided with a nice half-round, fine-cut file, to sharpen the hook of a good fly, of which you may not perhaps have the exact match. A nice hard-wood, flat, oblong stick, with a notch in the end, to push down the hook, if in the fish's tongue or throat, is also necessary ; and take care to kill your fish before you attempt to take out the hook, except it should be near, or the hold slight. Have several-sized salmon hooks, for trolling for trout, on strong single gut, which must be judiciously armed with nice wire (the brass lapping of piano-forte strings will



answer tolerably well if you are at a loss): they must be softened in a turf-fire, which produces white ashes—coal would burn the wire instantly. The reason of this precaution is, that large and small pike abound in these waters, and if your links were not armed you would lose fish and tackle pretty frequently ; for large old trout have strong and sharp teeth, and no fish comes more violently on its prey. If you can procure good white, grey, or chesnut horse-hair, it is much better adapted for droppers than gut, and, if even and sound, four hairs are sufficient. They will not cut the casting-line, nor adhere to it, as gut will, nor wear at the shank of the hook ; they fish better, and are easily taken off, particularly in night-fishing.

Now as these observations will equally apply to all lakes, and may be of use to anglers in general, I will for the present

defer describing different flies, and their different seasons, and proceed in my description of the Fergus lakes.

## TEDANE.

I have already stated that this lake was given up by all the anglers, though, from report, it was so good as to have at one time, five gentlemen's boats on it. Different reasons were given for the falling off, but not the true one, which was this—that the spawning fish were murdered without mercy; even now, while I write, I learn that upwards of four hundred large trout have been killed with spears and nets, within a few perches of the house of Mr. O'Brien of Elmvale, in the river flowing into Inchiquin, all within a few days, and on his estate—he being himself a magistrate. There is a beautiful passage from that most interesting work of

Izaak Walton's so much to the point that I will transcribe it :

“ But above all, the taking fish in spawning time may be said to be against nature ; it is like taking the dam on the nest, when she hatches her young : a sin so against nature that the Almighty God hath, in the Levitical law, made an ordinance against it.”

Now here is the true cause of want of sport—it is the want of fish ; for where they abound a good angler is sure to take them ;—and it must be acknowledged that there is great difficulty in taking fish where they are not.

This is the finest feeding lake I ever saw, —full of large yellow weeds, and limestone rocks, and a mountain flood in wet weather constantly flowing into it. The general run of trout weigh from five to seven, eight, nine, and ten pounds ; nay, I am sure they

would average much heavier were not the breeding fish murdered as they are. A trout weighing eighteen pounds was taken in a set-net, by a man of the name of Malony, in an angle of Tedane : it was sent by Mr. Sampson to Lord Fitzgerald. I have met a few very large ones, which by some mischance got away, and for the best of reasons, that they were able to do so—the largest I ever took not exceeding ten pounds, twenty-six inches in length, the fish of the best quality, and the skin speckled with large purple silvery spots. There cannot be a more beautiful fish than a large Tedane or Dromore trout—the bellies for the most part white and shining, the fish red and full of curd. I shall now state how I managed to kill a good many of these fine fish.

Single fishing and trolling did little except for pike. Finding this to be the case,

I borrowed a very bad cross-line, and tried the shore of an island. We killed two trout, one of seven pounds and three-quarters. I then perceived there were some fish in the lake, so I got two boats and set to work. We killed very few, but lost many flies. After much pondering I brought cross-fishing to something like a system. I made a slight cross-line in the manner which I shall hereafter describe: the upper links of the droppers were three-twist gut, the next two, and the lower strong single—all the knots were tied down—the flies also tied on excellent gut. The lake for the most part is not very deep, and each boat was provided with a tolerably long rope, with a heavy stone attached, which served for an anchor. We never played a fish until the heads of both boats were opposite, and against the wind. We then anchored—the flies were kept clear by the breeze. We at

first had only a large rod each, but we lost so many fish and flies by handling the line when a fish was in or near the centre, that I adopted another plan, which turned out to be most efficacious.

I caused two holes to be made in the seat of each boat, capable of receiving the butts of the large rods. We had a strong trout-rod tied up in each boat, with a bait-hook, having a very short link and without a beard, attached to the wheel-line, which, when any fish hooked towards the centre was a little tired, we managed to attach to the side next him, from which the dropper on which he was hooked depended, and then played him with the trout-rod.

The largest number we ever killed in a day was thirteen, and that only twice. On one occasion we weighed thirteen together, they weighed sixty-five pounds ; we had one thirty-four inches in length,

which weighed only eight pounds, and on the same day we lost one about that length, which was perfectly recovered. He got out of the net repeatedly, the wind being very strong at the time ; which was before the adoption of the second rod. I shall now relate a story told me by both the persons concerned—the circumstances having occurred long before I was an angler.

Mr. Pat. Lysaght, a tolerable angler, and a sporting character named Luke Morony, were fishing Tedane before dinner, and each had killed a very large trout. The two fish were so nearly equal in length and breadth, that the most practised eye could scarcely perceive a difference. A bet of a crown or two dozen of flies was made as to which was the heavier. On coming to dinner they were weighed ; when, to the astonishment of Mr. Lysaght and all be-

holders, Luke's trout weighed a half-pound more than Mr. Lysaght's.

“Why,” exclaimed he, ejaculating a round oath,—“is not this most extraordinary? Surely no one could suppose that there could be more than an ounce or so between them at most; yet see here!” taking his trout by the tail, and shaking him—when lo, a large stable key protruded from his mouth! At this, as may be supposed, there was a general laugh.

“Be not surprised, sir,” quoth Luke, also taking his trout in the same way, and shaking him well; when there issued, one by one, from his gullet, thirteen large bullets!—Luke had been shooting seals on the sea-coast. The laugh was now universal, and the bystanders adjudged that the bet was fairly won by Luke, and it was accordingly paid. How Izaak Walton would have been startled by an occurrence of this kind!



Before I dismiss my observations on Tedane, I will relate an incident that occurred some years ago to the master of the rolls (the late Sir Michael O'Loughlin, a most excellent angler) and myself on this lake.

We were cross-fishing in the evening, and at his side a large trout was hooked ; he called out that a second was fast on the next fly. I said—

“ You will lose one at least.”

“ No,” said he ; “ ’tis a monstrous pike that has the trout across his mouth.”

“ Leave him to me then,” I replied, “ for my gaff is larger than yours.”

“ No,” said he, “ he is much nearer to me.”

He gradually got him within reach, and gaffed him, but the fish smashed his gaff, and got away. He killed the trout, however, which weighed six and a-half pounds.

Sir Michael has told me that many persons have doubted the truth of this story, but it is a fact. The pike of this lake are very large, and it abounds with tench and roach. On hot days, which are unfit for angling, the latter may be taken in great numbers, some of them two pounds weight ; but there is no value set on this fish. There is also a practice adopted for killing eels, which hurts the angling on it—that of spear-  
ing for them across the greater part of it ; and this is so extensively practised, that when the rushes grow up, there is a regular flotilla of spearmen. A man stands on his bundle, poking before him with his long-handled spear. When he takes an eel, he bites its head between his teeth, and then strings it up with a needle on a long cord. Any thing so hideous as the appearance of these fellows, their faces begrimed with blood and dirt, can hardly be imagined.

## BALLYTIGUE, DROMORE, AND BALLYALLY.

These three lakes form the last of the Fergus chain, before it becomes a considerable river. The trout in the first are considerably larger than in any lake I ever fished in ; the run, scarcely less than six or seven pounds weight. It lies in a most desperate crag. A man once observed to me, that the cause of the fish being so very large was, that people were afraid of going to look for them. Late in the evening they are best taken with flies ; in the day by trolling with small fry or roach. This lake is near Mr. Bridgman's, M.P. for Ennis, who is a very good angler, but very careless in its preservation, for nets have been repeatedly set there before his face.

The flies adapted to it are much the same as for Inchiquin or Tedane : browns, olives, and middle-sized Dromore flies. There is

nothing interesting in its appearance, as in the other lakes ; it falls into one of the lakes of Dromore, which is extensive and beautiful. There cannot be a finer view than that from the old house of Dromore, (now a ruin). The lakes form a crescent about it, with rivers from one to another ; the islands charmingly wooded ; the plantations extensive ; several old castles and gentlemen's mansions ; a variety of hill and dale ; and the extensive prospect bounded by the Killaloe and Broadford mountains to the south and east, and the Mount Callan chain to the west. The different lakes and rivers, stretch from ten to twelve miles in circumference at least ; and all abounded with the finest trout, pike, tench, and roach, until the accursed plan of setting nets was adopted, since which, as if by an additional judgment, the perch have got into those three above-named lakes, and become numerous

and large—no fish being more destructive to spawn and small fry ; they even scare the trout from the regular feeding places.

Dromore was in my remembrance the best lake I ever saw for a good angler. The season extended from the 20th of January, at which early time the trout are well recovered, to the 10th of June, from about which day till the latter end of July the fish, except pike, were sulky, but from that time to the latter end of the season took fry, roach, and flies freely, particularly on rattling, windy days.

It was a fine sight to see these fine trout going in sculls, or shoals, with their fins and tails over water, after sunset ; then indeed if a good angler lodged his fly a foot before the nose of one of them, he had him instantly. In stormy days they rose well at small gaudy salmon flies, but chiefly at the dropper, which we always

kept skimming the wave. I have killed on the 24th of January, when the days are short, and after walking six miles, nine trout in excellent season, and lost five ; one of those I killed had a large eel in his throat ; and I have taken after sunset in the latter end of May, seven large trout, two of which weighed seven pounds each, the remainder from three and a-half to six pounds weight. They were often taken with frogs and tails of eels, but the small roach or trout fry are the best trolls. One of the best spots for evening fishing happened to be immediately under a gentleman's house—and to think of his suffering a set-net to be stretched across it on the night succeeding a day on which he himself had killed three or four trout at the lower end of it !

Oh, —— ! (I will not mention his name—he is now repentant, though,

alas ! too late)—what have you not to answer for ? On that night I was prevented by a gentleman who was with me from destroying the net, but a short time afterwards I lay in wait for it, and cut it into shreds, first taking out four fine trout, a pike, and four tench, all strangled ; and though on this night we failed of sport, we brought home plenty of fish. I however gave up the sport in disgust : the mischief was done, and scarce a peasant in the country has been since without a set-net ; and the lakes, Ballytigue and Dromore, are depopulated. I have not been on either for five years. On my last visit I was accompanied by Sheridan Knowles, an ornament both to England and Ireland, from each of which he claims descent ; but we could not catch a single fish, for the best of reasons, that they were not there to be caught. It is now said to be recovering a little.

Sir Michael had before his death vowed vengeance against the culprits, and it is to be hoped that his influence, even in the grave, may have some effect—though I much doubt it.

Next in order is Ballyally. It was never to be compared to any of the other lakes, but the trout are full as good, and some very large. The largest my friend J. H. ever saw or hooked was in cross-fishing this lake with me ; and a very excellent cross-fisher that gentleman is, though pretending to great virtue ; yet on this momentous occasion he showed neither skill nor dexterity, but bungled the trout ; and when a scene of recrimination took place between us, he showed ill-temper proportioned to his unskilfulness, against the poor rower who was endeavouring to excuse his misconduct.

And now—having described the Fergus



lakes—for a little instruction in night or evening fishing.

First, look to your wheel-line, and see that it is, according to Peter Simple, “*permanent*,” and by no means “*precarious*.” Have a spare casting-line about your hat; with a pair of good flies, rather darker in colour than those you had fished with in the day. Open the loops of all the flies you may expect to want, and have them in the band of your hat; I need not say of what kind, ribbed or plain, dark or light wings,—your judgment and the season must direct you. If the night be wet or stormy the Dromore fly is the best general tail fly, and a most excellent dropper is the hare’s ear and a little yellow, ribbed with gold cord, a grey or red heckle, with a grey heckle in the wing, with starling and goat-sucker feather wing; if not to be had, mix the grayest spotted partridge feather you

can get with the starling's feather : all shades of claret colours are also good at night, and so are deep browns. I do not approve of light browns or pale colours, except by day. Have a bit of sponge near your wheel if the night be wet. I shall give no direction about gloves—"muffled cats catch no mice," (the Irish adage is more coarse, and scarcely fit for "ears polite"). Your rod should be fourteen or fifteen feet in length. If your rod is too long you can scarcely get a second cast over a trout, particularly in high winds. Observe, if a trout rises, how his head is turned ; throw a little before him, and when you have got hold of him, lug fair and strong, don't lose time, have your priest at hand, and kill instantly, and before you take out the hook. Large trout are apt to get out of the rower's hands. I have more than once performed a feat of the kind

already described—that is, thrown a large trout into the lake, *unwillingly* and *unintentionally*, when intent on the fell purpose of killing him against the gunwale. Have a good long-bladed sharp knife, and a little flat-notched stick to push down the hook if necessary. Don't fish with too long a line on a fall. If, by accident, or because the trout is too near you, the rod be broke, and that trout are rising fast, draw in the wheel-line, don't wait to splice, but lap the two pieces together, and tie them well and fast. If you have not cord, why you must only break off a bit of your line and splice away, after which you may again commence. There is no necessity for your pointing out the rising fish to a good angler—keep your mind to yourself, and throw with precision and exactness, but ever have compassion on a poor beginner or novice, and show him all the sport you can. A

tangle is often fatal at night, therefore wait till your partner throws out. Be quick in changing your flies ; if you have great sport, a new top-loop should be attached pretty frequently ; also a new loop on the end of your casting-line every day, which will facilitate your change of flies. Keep your neck well covered at night, and in the evening when the dews are falling. Wear a flannel waistcoat, worsted stockings, and good strong shoes. When you come in, and are wet, change directly, and take care of yourself.

I now proceed to describe the different flies for the Clare lakes, and the manner, times, and seasons best adapted for taking fish in these fine waters.

First. Browns, cinnamons, and claret colour furs, of various shades : in the beginning of the season, plain land rail or starling wing. I have never fished Inchi-

quin before April, nor are the trout well recovered till then ; but they are recovered much earlier in Tedane and Dromore.

Next, hare's-ear and yellow mohair mixed, or plain hare's ear with very narrow gold cord on the body, red or grey heckle ; the wing, if plain rail or starling, rather upright, and it may be put on before the body, as it seems to me, with the exception of the yellow or green drake, the only fly with strutting wing. The breast feather of the peacock is sometimes mixed, and sometime tied Dromore way—that is, with peacock and mallard wing, and tinselled body, and in heavy winds it is excellent. Next, brown olives of various shades, and turf colours, tied as I have directed ; I have often seen these last excellent without any heckle, particularly in mild weather. Next, the large and small Dromore fly ; generally deep brown or claret-coloured body, yellow or

green tail, with four or five rows of tinsel round the body, and the heckle on the half-part next the wing, which is to be the breast feather of the peacock, tied down flat, and mallard or widgeon at each side, properly divided from the breast feather, and blue mohair or black ostrich head.

This is a most general fly on every river and lake I have ever fished, and excellent for salmon or peal for a change, after they have been a little time from the sea : it is a difficult fly to tie well. The Limerick fly-tiers fail in this fly. I recollect some years ago tying, in the month of July, six large flies of this kind for Captain Long, the recruiting paymaster of the Limerick district, who killed, for six successive days, seven or eight peal a day, and was each day deprived of one by the large knowing salmon, which were up to the sharp rocks. At length the fly tiers raised a general out-

cry against me, refusing to make hooks or rods, or accommodate me in any way, so that in the end I was obliged to desist. Captain Long told me the peal rose very well at the smooth-bodied flies, though they would scarcely ever take ; but it was quite different with the Dromore, and when he lost one, he would not put up a second that day. I had often fished with them in the streams about Limerick as droppers, greatly to the vexation of my cotmen, and was in general deprived of them by the large fish ; but this vagary I would not practice on Donass.

As the season advances spotted wings are requisite. And I here recommend that every angler who can tie flies should be provided with a watchmaker's small microscope, and look through it at the natural fly on the rushes or rocks, and make his body and wings as like to it as possible.

Many other flies are excellent. *The*

*grouse Lochaber* : yellow, orange, or light green silk body ; six or seven turns of the feather round the body ; and when finished, half the feather lying on the belly-part, or inside of the hook cut short : peacock herle head, or ostrich. In tying this fly I always twist my silk for the body ; it forms a sort of rib, and is a protection to the grouse feather, which if once cut the fly is destroyed. There is also the hawthorn fly : the tail-part of a black horse hair, with two little mallard horns ; thick under the wing, with a black heckle ; whitish starling wing, rather short, and two small horns in the head. I once lost a very great day's sport on Dromore for want of this description of fly. The lake was covered with a very large size of this kind ; numbers of trout were on the feed, and though they rose at other flies, not one would take. In high winds a small salmon-fly is often taken : in



spring, on Dromore, it is one of the best.

Now supposing that a couple of keen sportsmen determined on passing a week or two on these waters, it shall be my endeavour to direct them in the way they should go.

First—Corofin should be head quarters. Two gentlemen can be tolerably well accommodated at Mrs. O'Brien's, a widow lady. In the season there is plenty of kid, bacon, and chickens to be had, and there can scarcely be a lack of fish. A car goes each day to Ennis, and returns to Corofin, so that every necessary is easily procured. As to tackling, if the weather should be too calm or fine, (which seldom happens,) let small roaches be procured by some of the "brats" of Corofin, who for a few pence, being provided with two or three little hooks and small flies, will furnish them of all

sizes. Troll the lake carefully ; the larger bait inside for pike, the smaller outside for trout, on strong single gut, but well armed, as aforesaid, with good slight wire. If the wind stirs up, why well and good ; take in one or both trolling rods, according to circumstances, and fly-fish. If on Inchiquin, remark that if the wind gets round from south to west, you have every chance of a stiff breeze ; in that case make under the mountain, where you will have land shelter, and where the sport is often excellent at the river's mouth.

You must have boats on Inchiquin and Tedane, and they are easily had at Ennis or Corofin. If the weather is so stormy that you cannot show your nose on either lake, be provided with a small five-fly cross-line, and try Corofin or Kilnaboy river, and it is probable you will have sport, (for the trout are fine and well-fed in both,) particularly

if you don't value a little wet in your feet. Or else, if there is no boat on a small lake called Rah, put on one of yours, and you may be sure of plenty of fish.

Major Robertson and I were the first persons who fished this little lake, which had been stocked a few years before with fry, from the mills of Inchiquin. The "natives" were under the impression that there was a monster in the lake capable of devouring boat and anglers, and much do I regret that they did not continue under this delusion. The large hill over the lake was crowded to witness the devouring process ; which might have been performed not *upon* but *by* us ; for, from two, P.M. to nine, we killed sixty-eight trout, thirty of which would have averaged two pounds round ; and on a day when no other lake could be fished ; the quality and size certainly not equal to the fish of the other lakes, but by

no means bad. In this lake there are no pike ; nor did we ever troll it ; but in trolling, a large trout is often killed with the pike-bait, and *vice versa*. I have killed, one morning before breakfast, on Inchiquin thirteen pike and eight trout—the pike from eighteen to six pounds, the trout from four and a-half to two and a-half pounds weight. I once killed on Inchiquin, with a pike-bait, a trout of ten and a-half pounds weight,—the largest trout I ever took, though I have often hooked bigger ones, which by some mischance had escaped.

In trolling, my plan is as follows :—My lines are strong silk, well oiled ; casting-lines three-gut twisted, with one or two swivels ; from twenty-five to thirty yards of line let out : both lines on the handle of the wheel, if the bait is not very large. I let the fish pull well at it, and then strike. I hate cutting the gut of a fish, besides it

may be a trout, as that fish often holds the bait like a pike ; but I strike with the top of my rod low, and near the water. I don't approve of raising the hand till the fish is firm. The pike in these waters are as strong as salmon : no fish goes with greater rapidity from the surface to the bottom.

Thus much is sufficient as to the different ways of playing fish ; but one word of caution before concluding :—beware of a pike's teeth, he will bite you if he can.

## CHAPTER XV.

ON ANGLING FOR TROUT IN RIVERS, AND SOME GENERAL  
DIRECTIONS FOR TYING TROUT FLIES.

I WILL now add some general instructions for angling in rivers for trout ; and, as much depends on the width and size of the river, I will be as explicit as possible.

If the river is wide and full of weeds, fish with a single fly, but if there are strong currents and fair ground, you may have two ; which are sufficient, particularly where the fish are large, but if for small fish, you may have an additional dropper.

If you see a fish rise, never throw directly over him ; throw your line across the stream, and judge it so that the fly may come about

a foot above where he rises ; and if he likes your fly he will have it, but if he gradually drops down, you may be sure he does not. You must then change, or watch the kind of fly on the water, and match it if possible ; and when a trout rises eagerly at the kind you have put up, fish away, and it is probable you may have sport.

It often happens that trout will rise at flies drawn against the stream ; but throwing down and across is much the most killing method.

If you fish in dead flats, and there is little or no wind, always fish with a single fly ; and if trout are rising, manage to throw your fly into the very break made by them : this requires a nice hand, much practice, and fine, but strong, tackle. When you hook a large trout, hold him as well as your means will allow, particularly if there are weeds, to which he will endeavour to

make. I have never seen trout go to rocks, as salmon do, but always to weeds, therefore, in such a case, do not give them their will, but if you get their heads over water, hold them so until they give up.

There are still many trout-flies to be treated of—Palmers, caterpillars, blue-blow, and others, that deserve notice—and which will claim attention in due time ; at present I will give general instructions for tying trout-flies of all kinds, except those numerous minute ones, which I purpose passing over, for two reasons—first, because they can be purchased very cheaply in the shops ; secondly, because tying those very small flies, such as the pismire, &c., is very trying and hurtful to the sight.

As before directed, (in the instructions for tying salmon-flies,) have a large sheet of white paper ; on this lay out all your necessary materials—tinsel, gold and silver cord,



floss silk, yellow, orange, and green, (break mohair for tails of the above colours,) together with dirty yellow, or Isabella, as Izaak Walton calls it. Silks are the fittest tails for small flies, and sometimes for large ones. Untwist the gold cord, but leave some entire for large flies. Clean your tinsel with a bit of chalk, when tarnished ; clip the points of heckles, as previously directed, taking care that they are adapted to the sized hook you are about to tie, and have them ready to put on ; break the furs well between your fingers, and pick out any very strong fibres.

Observe that by furs, I mean pig's fur, or down ; any others are of little value, except for tails and for jibs. Brown mallard and widgeon are preferable for jibs, and the most generally used. Rail and starling wings, partridge tails, grouse feathers, breast feather peacock, and the herle of the moon of it, for heads, and often for the body of a small

fly. Wax your silk well, and mind, that if twisted, the twist must be out from you—that is, to the right ; and if untwisted, the silk must be double. Take care to let the twist be as I direct, for by that means there will not be any danger of the body or tail of the fly separating from the silk.

Let the links of gut, on which you purpose tying the respective flies, be proportioned to the size of the hook you are about to tie ;—strong for large-sized hooks, weak for small ones ; and all flies must be tied on the strongest end of the link.

Now you have every thing at hand. Arm your link correctly by twisting it between your fingers, having first laid your waxed silk on it ; or, if you would rather try another way, stick a pin in the knee of your *culotte*, or pantaloons, and if the link is not looped, roll it three or four times round the pin, and then arm at your

leisure. It will be perceived that I want to render my brother anglers independent of aught but a pin. Leave out a little of the shank for wing, and let the link be tied steadily under the shank, and nearly opposite the beard of the hook, taking care that the said link is previously well bitten, to make it lie properly, and prevent its slipping: then opposite the beard of the hook put on the tail, viz.: tinsel, gold cord, or only silk, sometimes tinsel and mohair, or silk—all to be judged of according to the size of the fly. Then put on the jib, two or three fibres of mallard or widgeon—afterwards the heckle; then twist the fur or mohair slightly and slenderly at first near the tail, and thickening gradually towards the head, and turn under the shank: after which roll on the heckle, turning it nicely according to the natural lie of the feather; fasten, and then turn in; and

so leave it without raising when you are about to put on the wing, which may be of what kind you fancy, divided or not. You may then add a head of peacock herle or ostrich, or not, as you choose.

Many prefer having the heckle on half the fly ; and in this I think they may be right, for the feet of most natural flies are only near the head. In this latter way, when a few turns of silk are tied on the hook, the heckle is put on about the middle, before tying up to the tail ; care must be then taken in raising the heckle when tying up the body. I need not make any additional observation about putting tinsel or cord about the body before putting on the heckle. I will now describe what I conceive to be the Palmer, and I class it as different from the caterpillar.

## PALMER.

A rather small-sized fly. Body yellow, green, or orange silk, for the most part yellow. I think that colour is best. Silver or gold tinsel tip or tail, brown mallard jib, a small blackcock's heckle or lapwing's head topping, rolled four or five times round the body. Sometimes a red heckle is used. Starling wing undivided—no herle head.

## CATERPILLAR.

Rather long body, tied up in the common way, but further towards the bow of the hook, a very slight gold or silver cord tail, with two strips of black horse-hair short as jibs ; then the green herle of the peacock before alluded to for salmon fishing for the body. The heckle, either black or red,

must be very large in proportion to the size of the fly, and it must be held by the small end in the left hand, and its fibre gently smoothed down to the right before putting on.

Several rows of gold cord pretty close are to be rolled round the body, and the heckle put on carefully before every row, with a couple of additional rows next the head, which may be dirty yellow, claret colour, or bright brown, with two little black beads as eyes for large flies, but not for the small ones ; a couple of the fibres of the fitch as horns in the head: this fly is sometimes good, particularly when the weeds appear.

It may be also tied of any other colour, yellow or orange silk body ; and a very large description of this kind may be sometimes used as a change for salmon. I have tried the small kind on Inchiquin with little success ; and one day on the Fergus, when there

was no wind, rose a salmon with one of the large description, but he did not touch it, and the day after I killed him with a large grey fly.

There is also a most excellent general trout-fly, body olive, or olive brown, with a wren tail heckle, and for larger size two of the little tail feathers as wings, and if still larger, two feathers at each side of the wing. The colour is often varied to any shade, brown or green olive.

The only small fly I shall at present notice, is the blue-blow ; yellow silk tail, black human hair jib, moleskin body, tom-tit wing. It is excellent in all rivers in the latter end of April and the beginning of May, and must be tied on a very slight link.

As for a catalogue of all the minute descriptions of flies, I, for the present, refer my readers to Walton and Cotton, who, to do them justice, are unintelligible enough in

many instances, particularly in describing the tying the caterpillar, an insect, indeed, very easily imitated. I do not think I have yet noticed the large Westmeath fly, the rush fly, or the green drake ; and as these descriptions of fly are in very general use on all our lakes, large and small, I will be particularly exact in my directions for tying them.

#### WESTMEATH LARGE FLY.

This fly must be really large. I have never known a small-sized one answer well ; the hook the size of a small-sized salmon peal-fly. When you tie your hook on the link, about half way to opposite the beard, put on the heckle, which must be a large one, and in general a deep red ; after which tie up to opposite the beard ; then put on for tail some nice slight gold cord ; then twist some



yellow or green mohair, which should join the gold cord, and be slight and not too rough ; then put on three fibres of brown mallard for jib ; those described form the tail and jib. You then twist the coloured fur you wish for the body, on the silk, having first broken it well and picked out the very strong hairs ; tie it slightly, that is, thinly, to where you put on the heckle, which raise, —and note, that from thence down to where the wing is to commence, the fur is to be put on thicker, and then fastened, first rolling round the heckle. You are then to take a sufficiency of good brown mallard spotted feathers to form the wing, which you are to lay down along the hook, taking care that the wing be not much longer than to project very little beyond the bow of the hook, and also taking care to fasten the wing sufficiently ; when done, take a pin and divide the wing equally to each side, by putting a

turn of the silk between each compartment ; after which, put your silk into the eye of two little red or black beads, which are to form the eye of the fly, and put one at each side, making them firm by a turn of the silk between each ; after which put on a couple of fibres of the spotted mallard as horns, and knot twice between them and the eyes, and the fly is finished.

Many different coloured flies are tied in this way—for instance, hare's ear and yellow, with red or gray heckle, hare's ear and claret colour mixed, dark browns, blacks, sooty and green olives, fiery browns, light browns and cinnamons ; and on many of them gold cord is added, according to fancy, and they are standard flies on all the large lakes of our island particularly ; and I have seen them often kill fish on the Clare lakes, particularly on dull heavy days, with little wind. They are excellent on Dromore. I

always use them for droppers, in hand fishing, but for cross-fishing they must be, of necessity, tied on long links. Some prefer a heckle on the entire body from the tail downwards.

#### THE RUSH FLY.

This fly, whether large or small, is an excellent one ; but is tied in some respects differently from the Westmeath one, for the tail is only yellow or gold-coloured silk, and there is no jib. The colour, generally deep brown olive ; and, if to be had, the heckle of that colour, full, and only on half the fly next the head. The wing is formed from the single feather of the rail, right and left, according to the size of the fly. Of course, you must be always provided with both wings of the rail to tie this fly properly.

When you have put on these feathers to sit well, there is generally a little space be-

tween them, which you may fill up with a few fibres of the spotted partridge feather ; after which attach, as horns, to the head two or three strips of mallard feather ; and the eyes generally little black or red beads, and knot twice between the horns and the eyes.

For the months of August and September, this fly is tied with the part of the body next the tail of a lively green, the other half of a brighter or paler brown : it is chiefly used for a dropper, as the wings for a tail fly will not stand throwing ; and it is a most excellent fly on a cross-line.

#### THE GREEN DRAKE.

Here is a regular bull—for the fly is yellow. The body, generally plain yellow mohair, with a large yellow heckle ; tail, orange, small, with slight gold cord ; and three

strips of dyed yellow mallard as jibs. The heckle put on full. Wing, dyed yellow mallard ; and eyes as heretofore described, with three strips of the mallard as horns. The wing full, regularly divided, and not to project much beyond the bow of the hook : the silk knotted twice between the eyes and the horns.

These three latter descriptions—namely, the Westmeath, the rush, and the green drake—should be well varnished on the fastenings and between the eyes.

In each woodcock's wing there is a small, stiff-pointed feather—often used by ladies for ornamental work—which will answer this purpose better than any other kind of pencil that I am aware of ; and it can be easily tied to a little slight stick or bit of a quill, and should be cleaned in hot water after being used.

The green drake is sometimes tied with

the body, first entirely tinselled, after which the mohair and heckle are put on, and at times, as I understand, the tinsel is covered with clarified Indian rubber, as a body, but of this process I know nothing, nor indeed have I ever fished much with the green drake.

There are still some other flies that deserve description. One is a large-sized dropper, about the size of a small peal-fly, which I have found very effective on the lakes. When you tie up the hook to opposite the beard, put on a silver tinsel tail, followed by green mohair, properly twisted ; after which put on, for jib, some breast feather gold pheasant, mixed with guinea-hen spotted feather,—all of a proper length ; after which put on, for heckle, a good-sized lap-wing topping ; next some slight two or three-twist gold cord, afterwards some orange or deep-coloured gold silk, for body. You

then run down your tying-silk to where you intend to put on the wing, and turn, as directed, under the shank of the hook. You then lay on the silk body, and turn in ; next you put five rows of the gold cord on the body, fasten, and turn in ; after which put on the heckle, before and under the gold cord, with a couple of turns additional towards the head, and fasten and turn in, and there leave your tying-silk until you put on the wing, which is composed of gold pheasant breast strips, mixed with brown-tail pheasant, or good turkey feather, which fasten well ; then put a strip of macaw, mixed with guinea-hen, at each side, for side feathers ; blue mohair, well broken, or black ostrich, for head, which, when put on, separate the side feathers from the wing at each side, and knot twice between them. This is a troublesome fly enough, if tied of a small size—but it is a

very killing one, and in clear rivers may be used for salmon or peal.

The next fly I shall notice is a hare's ear and yellow, tied plain, with a yellow tail, rather large-sized, and a red or gray heckle; for wing, the breast feather of the peacock, with spotted brown mallard, in proper proportion, for side feathers; blue mohair head, which when put on, the mallard side feathers are to be separated at each side from the wing and kept down until the fly is finished, by knotting twice between the side feathers and the wing; after which the blue mohair head is to be picked out a little, if too clumsy.

This, with the difference of not tinselling the body, is, in fact, the Dromore fly a little varied, and it is a most excellent one on lake or river, and always used as a tail-fly: there is no better for a cross-line.



## THE MOTH-FLY.

The best-coloured body for this fly is weasel-fur and yellow mixed, with a red heckle ; very small orange tip or tail ; for wing, either the soft feather of the kite, or owl's feather, a little spotted : it may be large or small, with two little bead eyes, separated and varnished between.

## CHAPTER XVI.

FURTHER NOTICE OF THE CLARE LAKES, AND ADVICE NOT  
TO BE DISCOURAGED BY APPARENT DIFFICULTIES, AND  
THE ADVICE ILLUSTRATED.

I HAD omitted to state that parallel with Tedane and Ballytigue, though not directly communicating with them, there are a chain of fine lakes. Monana is within a mile of Corofin—full of pike ; and I have been informed that trout are now to be seen there, but of this I cannot speak to a certainty. Next, Lake George and Funelough, and within two miles of Corofin there lies a series of fine lakes, for about five miles in length, having very fine trout, and these lakes are almost unexplored. In short, go where you will in this county (Clare), cross it as

you please, you can't fail of meeting a lake or river within a mile.

Well may Mr. Boyd, our intelligent engineer, say, that this county must have been the first part of the island that was settled ; for that it abounds more with the necessities and luxuries of life than any other county he was ever in : but apathy, negligence, and non-residence are the curse of it ; and, to crown all, a most indiscriminate system of the vilest poaching is practised, under the eye, and often with the cognizance of the resident gentry who live on the borders of these lovely lakes and rivers, and who suffer their tenantry, even in the midst of winter, to destroy the breeding fish, to say nothing of the example set by stretching set-nets in these lakes, a practice, I am concerned to state, still persevered in.

The late Sir Michael O'Loughlen did a

great deal to check it, and his example will be now followed by Mr. Crowe, jun., who has gone to reside at Dromore House, near to the beautiful ruin which I have described. The new house is excellent, but does not possess the advantage, in point of site, the old one did.

I have already spoken of the excellence of the tinselled eel's-tail: an angler should never be without one. I have killed on Inchiquin nine pike with one, when a man fishing with a plain one could not get a bite; and on Tedane one evening I killed two pike, one of twenty-three and one of nineteen pounds, and the same evening caught two trout, weighing together twelve pounds, with single flies.

I consider it right to observe that, in the early part of the season, and until the natural fly makes its appearance, that is, about the 17th of March, you should always

fish with large, or at least middle-sized flies ; but when the natural flies come out, you must endeavour to be exact in your imitations, more, however, as to the colour of the body and the wing than the size, for if you match the kind, a little difference of bigness will not signify, especially in blowing weather.

All the lake flies I have hitherto described are fully as effective on the other lakes of the kingdom ; and I have it from competent authority that in many rivers in France, the Inchiquin and small Dromore were found the most killing fly. The Westmeath lakes I have not fished. The green drake seems the great favourite there ; but I am obliged to hazard an observation, that, from what I have seen of their flies, I don't think the anglers on their borders seem to possess much judgment, for I never could discover that they

fished with any other than a large-sized fly.

Now I know that Counsellor H. has often killed trout in those lakes with Inchiquin and small Dromore flies. It was just the same story at Lough Mask until I adopted the principle of fishing with small flies in light winds.

At the time I first fished Inchiquin there were several excellent, and some but middling anglers sporting on the different lakes—Col. Charles M'Donnell, Daniel Finucane, the Rev. Roger Haddock, Walter Arthur, Jones Harrisson, John Bellassisse, and some others ; and, in another degree, our fly tier, Corny Gorman, before described : there were besides Luke Morony, Barrett, Stack, and a few more, with all of whom I had occasionally fished : all—all departed, with the exception of my school-fellow and class-fellow, Jones Harrisson, who, I am happy

to hear, is alive and well in Bath or Cheltenham.

Of all sportsmen, I had a decided preference for John Bellassisse, who had been my principal instructor in shooting and fishing. He was much the best shot I ever met, and a capital general angler for trout, pike, and salmon ; and from precept and example I became an apt and a cunning scholar. We generally fished Inchiquin with flies, principally in falls ; but if on a lee shore, little chance of sport had I or any one else, if Jack had the first throw in the head of the boat, as little as I would now have with my friend J—— if similarly placed.

We generally killed from twelve to twenty, sometimes thirty well-sized trout every day we had wind ; some trout not well recovered, as is often the case in Inchiquin, though very rarely in Tedane or Dromore.

When the season was advanced, we often fished till eleven at night with success. From about the 10th of June we trolled during the day for trout and pike with small fry, and seldom fly-fished till sunset. We rose early, lived quietly, and killed vast quantities of fish, but were entirely dependant on Corny, who repeatedly disappointed us of flies and tackling—sometimes from caprice, oftener from drunkenness. I perfectly recollect the first occasion that forced me to try my hand at fly-tying.

Jack and I were cross-fishing Tedane, which had been long given up by all the anglers. We had fourteen flies on our line, and though many trout were rising, not one would take. We had been as usual disappointed by Corny. We caught some of the flies that were going on the water, and Jack said—"Can't you try and tie something like these? You can tie a bait hook,



and you must try. I have a bit of stuff of the colour, (a turf colour,) besides a rail's wing and a mallard feather."

To work I went under a bush, cut off a couple of the flies on the line, tied up one in a clumsy way, had no tinsel for a tail, put on a couple of mallard strips for a jib, made many efforts to put on the body before I succeeded, merely from the circumstance of twisting the silk improperly, but at last finished my work in a fashion, and then tied a second rather better. They were clumsy, ill-tied devils, but the exact colour and wing of the flies on the water, and up they went on the line, one at each side.

In a short time we killed six fine trout, and not one with any other fly on the line. From that time I set about gathering mohairs, furs, feathers, and materials of all piscatory kinds, for salmon and trout; and

from occasional talks with Corny when he was "soft," that is, half drunk, (at which times I took care to be very civil,) I became a tolerable proficient, and practised tying whenever I was disappointed, which was by no means an unfrequent occurrence.

Now here is encouragement to an angler not to be appalled by seeming difficulties ; and it is further illustrative of the propriety of observing the kind of fly on the water.

Having said so much of Corny, I will relate an anecdote quite characteristic of the man.

On his way to Dublin to see the late Mr. Hayes of Westmoreland-street, who was his nephew, and always treated him with the greatest kindness, he went into a dram shop at Naas, and called for a glass of whiskey, which he instantly threw off in a peculiar way, without suffering the glass

to touch his lips. A sergeant standing by exclaimed—

“By G——, Corny Gorman could not do that better!”

CORNY.—“Why, hell to you, what do you know of Corny?”

SERGEANT.—“I know nothing of him at all, but have been told that there’s not a man in Ireland that can match him in pitching down a glass of whiskey.”

CORNY.—“Well, I am the man, and you’re heartily welcome, serjeant, to see me make another offer, and try your hand yourself,” on which he ordered a half-pint, which they finished between them.

I saw poor Corny the day before his death. The cholera was then raging in Ennis. He requested I would not go into the street, but said he did not mind it himself. In a few hours he was no more.

The morning after, I was struck down : the town for some time was like the city of the dead ; scarce a mortal was to be seen, and most of the houses were closed, and abandoned by the terrified inhabitants.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## LOUGH MASK—CONNEMARA.

IN the latter part of the harvest of 1833, and subsequently to the time of the dreadful plague which so efficiently checked the superabundant population of this country, I left Dublin to enjoy a few days' sport on this grand lake.

As we proceeded, nothing could be more awful than the aspect of all the towns we passed through. The poor seemed as if risen from the grave, or about to descend into it. Our route after leaving Hollymount was circuitous, over causeways and across passes, between this lake and another called Lough Carra; but the beautifully

situated villa of the Mr. Plunkets (Tourma-keady) made ample amends for the trifling inconvenience experienced in approaching it. It lies about a mile from the lake, on the borders of a fine and large mountain river—fronts the sunny south, and is stored with all necessities and luxuries for sportsmen—besides medicine chests for the poor, who during the dreadful period I have alluded to were amply provided for in every possible way: indeed all the inhabitants of this district look up to those gentlemen as their best benefactors, as they furnish them with constant employment, and have also been mainly instrumental in providing them a place of worship. This fact I learned from their late pastor, the Rev. Henry Joyce, a mild and amiable man, who is since dead. I was at this time in a very delicate state of health, but nothing could equal the kindness I met with. Game was

plenty. I was provided with excellent guns, and all necessary appointments ; but I was not sufficiently recovered for shooting : so I looked to the lake, and determined to try what could be done with the tackle here, not having any of my own. Bad screw-rods, long, slight four and six-oared gigs, by no means adapted to this inland sea—such were what I found ; but I made an essay, and caught four tolerable-sized trouts. (All this time Mr. P. was shooting ; the day became very wet, and he had little sport.) I found the middle-sized Dromore fly, and the large bright brown dropper, with mallard wing and beaded eyes, were then the best flies on this water ; also the large and small green drake, tolerably good.

I remarked that though there were many natural flies out, the trout were not rising at them ; and that the run were much

smaller than on the Clare lakes ; but soon discovered the probable cause, namely, that the large trout were running up to the shallows in Joyce's Country, from whose bourne they were not suffered to return.

On a view of the river, after having walked a mile or two up it, I suggested a remedy, which I find has been since adopted, and with success, large fish being now very frequently caught, and of excellent quality.

But let me pass on to a description of the magnificent waters of this country. Mask is at least from twelve to fifteen miles in length, and in some parts seven or eight in breadth. It abounds in islands, some prettily wooded ; but there are many shoals and some dangerous rocks. Several considerable rivers fall into it at all sides, and some high mountains rise boldly from the water's edge. It fronts Tourmakeady to



the south, and crescents about it to the west and south-east. The villa is on a fine slope, and much of the ground is reclaimed and planted. A fine water-course runs through the dog-kennel, and every thing in the way of irrigation is complete, including hot baths, cold baths, and shower baths. Several buildings and improvements are projected ; but a more comfortable dwelling cannot be than it is at present, provided as it is with the best beds, warmest rooms, best meats, liquors, and wines—a paradise in a desert, in fact, all offered to your service in the truest spirit of politeness—frank good nature.

To the south-west of Mask lies Cong, by which it communicates with Lough Corrib, but subterraneously. The distance is not more than two miles—perhaps less. To the north-east it joins Lough Carra, another large lake, but not equal to Mask.

Now when this country shall be known—which it certainly is not at present—will it not be wonderful if these magnificent waters are not connected by canals? Lough Corrib itself is about thirty miles in length, it is but a short way from thence to Lough Mask, which is not more than a mile from Lough Carra, a lake which conducts you into the very heart of Mayo; and so on to the ocean on the north sea. Then, from the Lough Corrib side, may not a canal be made to connect the bay of Galway through the Clare lakes, which are abundant, and for the most part level with the Fergus and Shannon? These are vast conceptions, and not likely to be realized in our time, but may possibly come to pass in less than Mr. Doball's in Peter Simple.

Shortly after our arrival we were joined by Mr. D——, nephew to the late Lord Norbury of facetious notoriety, rather an

indifferent angler, but an agreeable companion, and an excellent picquet player, in the rudiments of which game he instructed Mr. P——; but at whist, in which I could have borne a part, our number precluded us from forming a party.

We again tried the lake in a light wind with but middling success; but, the day after, got a bad, unwieldy cross-line, and, with an awful sea running, killed a good many trout, and lost more—the long boats, in fact, were so very hard to turn or manage, that the flies were snapped off before we could go about. On one occasion it was ludicrous to see Mr. P—— and the sportsman in a great surf trying to land a large trout. I could not forbear laughing, (knowing they were good swimmers,) though I fully expected that they would tumble out of the boat; nor, after all, did

they succeed, but lost both trout and fly.

Mr. P—— has since provided excellent boats, capable of standing any weather ; and I am happy to find that, with his increased proficiency in angling, the sport has improved on Lough Mask, which I hope to re-visit on a future day, in the society of him and his excellent brother D——, with whom I made acquaintance at Delphi—the best fishing spot I ever saw, and which, with a little trouble, can be made the primest angling residence in Ireland.

I shall, in a journal which forms the next chapter, give some account of my first visit to that romantic spot, and purpose to pursue the subject farther before the close of this work.

On our return to Dublin, an incident occurred to my excellent friend and host,

Mr. P——, calculated to suggest the most profound reflections on the ingratitude of the fair sex, but which various considerations forbid me to make public.

“ Oh, woman, in our hours of ease,” &c.

SCOTT.

“ Oh, woman, woman, whether lean or fat.” &c.

P. PINDAR.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

JOURNAL OF A PILGRIMAGE TO CONNEMARA, AND A VOYAGE  
UP AND ACROSS KILLERY BAY.

“ON the 19th of May, 1838, I received a letter from my friend, Mr. P.—, desiring that I should meet him the next morning in Galway. Here was an impracticability—no conveyance but the mail, which could not arrive until four or five P.M.—notice short; but determined on going, and took my place for the following morning.

“20th.—Set off inside—never travel outside when I can help it—bad spirits—no company—passed through Crusheen, a small village—idle fellows, with their mouths open, standing at the doors of their cabins—from thence to near Tubber, where

we stopped to repair some casualty for a few minutes—alighted, and entering into conversation with a countryman, he pointed out to me the field where two old gentlemen of the name of Bouchier and Evans (each over seventy) fought, and were each mortally wounded. Evans died first, and on Bouchier's being informed of the circumstance, he asked who 'prepared' him. Hearing that it was the parson, he gave immediate orders to have the priest sent for, declaring that he was determined at least to travel a different road from his antagonist—his orders were literally obeyed. This circumstance is a fact, and is substantiated by a descendant of a connexion of the family. Mr. Bouchier was, I believe, father to the late Mr. Bouchier of the Hanaper office.

“Passed by Mr. Butler's and Lord Gort's demesnes—commencement of red petticoats,

which seem to be peculiar to the Connaught women—reminded me of the old song—

“‘ As I was a riding hard by a pig sty,  
I saw a red petticoat hanging awry.’

“Women ordinary and sun-burnt—the country flat, with many lakes. Surely this fine island was intended by nature for canals! Are its capabilities to be for ever neglected?

“Passed through Oranmore, rather a better kind of village, and arrived in Galway hungry, but too early for dinner. It was Sunday—saw the pious returning from all places of worship—women not to be compared to the Clare and Limerick ones—went to see the weir where salmon are kept alive—politely received by Mr. Keogh, who is an angler, and who gave me permission to fish, of which I could not avail myself, it being Sunday. Mr. Keogh



said he had seen a white trout killed between the bridges seventeen and a half pounds weight. Learned that Mr. P—— had gone on before, much to my satisfaction, as there was a doubt of his being able to come implied in his letter. Dined at Kilroy's, a very tolerable hotel—good beds, and prices not out of reason for beds or dinners. A long polemical argument with a Methodist preacher, whom I guess I nearly converted to the ancient faith. A young naval gentleman one of our party, not promoted, though of long standing—a relative of Lord John Russell. Those Whigs, with nine-tenths of the people with them, afraid of their shadows.

“May 21.—Set off on Bianconi's car—few passengers—delightful view of Lough Corrib—many islands, and several sailing vessels—travelled at a tolerable rate to Oughterard—hotel in process of roofing,

and nearly dismantled. Was informed that if rain did not fall, we might as well have stayed at home. Fine road to Flynn's—a succession of red petticoats and jackets, and plain women, with the exception of the Misses Flynn, two fine tall handsome young women. Learned that Mr. Pigot was at the time fishing through Connemara, catching what we would deem pinkeens. Took Flynn's car to Maam, and how much farther I could not tell.

“Learned that Mr. Martin, who is, in fact, a territorial lord, would not grant leases to the poor tenantry of his wretched wild land, which certainly possesses in many places vast resources for improvement, for limestone is seen even on the roads in various parts of this savage district. Immense mountains in every direction, and many middle-sized lakes. Arrived at Maam, where I refreshed myself and the

driver, who was brother to the two fine girls I have noticed. Wrote my name in due form in the hotel book, in which I was glad to find that several good anglers had left their autographs before me.

“ Continued my pilgrimage until I reached an arm of the sea called the Killerys ; and, seeing some boats, declared I would not go farther by land. With much difficulty procured a skiff to take me I did not know where, or how far—became restless, saucy, and fretful—told the men, what was true, that they were bad rowers. One of them asked if I had ever been on the water before. He was much surprised when I told him I had seen more salt water in one day than he had during his life. Seemed to have gained some respect in consequence of this observation. After about three miles’ rowing, went across, and asked where Delphi was. ‘ About two miles off.’ De-

sired the men take my luggage, and leave their oars in the boat. They replied that if they did they would have no account of them on their return. Heartily tired, having come by various conveyances over fifty miles from Galway. Sun down, and late—expected dinner to be over, but in this I was most agreeably deceived, Mr. P—— meeting me at his gate, and informing me that I was just in time ; and here the pilgrimage ended for the present.

“ Dinner and wines excellent, with Guinness’s best porter and ale—neither hungry nor thirsty going to bed—fine fire—every thing excellent—but was struck with horror on my first glance at the bedstead, which was one of the most perfect lightning conductors I ever saw, and this among some of the loftiest mountains of Ireland. Bedstead, roof, head-board, feet, wheels, all gilt brass.

“‘Who,’ said I in despair, ‘could be so frantic as to make such an arrangement?’

“On inquiry I found that it was part of the furniture left by the Marquis of Sligo, the lord of the whole country, and that my excellent host was entirely guiltless of the enormity.

“DELPHI

“A more appropriate name could not be given. A fine lodge, embosomed in a very handsome and extensive thriving plantation, neatly and tastefully arranged. A lake about a mile and a-half in circumference in front—four or five mountains of most abrupt ascent, and between two and three thousand feet high, surrounding the demesne and lake, through which the river takes its course from a much larger lake called Doologh, a quarter of a mile distant. Within

three or four miles of Delphi, towers above all the other peaks Mulrea, the highest mountain in Connaught ; and so much for the descriptive.

“ 23rd.—Arrangement of fishing-tackle—  
informed by Mr. P—— that he had left his behind, but that he expected it by the Westport coach—had been more exact myself, having brought mine with me. Boats ordered—some difficulty in boring a place for the wheel in a new rod which I had brought, and which was found to be excellent—was surprised at Mr. P——’s improvement in throwing a line. We made an irruption on the lake rather late in the day—were told that it was full of salmon—good wind—the point not approved of by the natives—caught many trout, some of rather large size, but by no means well recovered. After fishing two or three rounds, became rather incredulous as to the

salmon, and determined that on the next day we should proceed to extremities, and force our adversaries, if such there were, to a pitched battle.

“Dinner, as usual, excellent—much mirth about the forgotten tackling—plenty of entertaining chat on various topics—no account of Mr. Pollock, who was expected; but we felt no sense of loneliness, nor did we even resort to cards or gambling, those miserable resources of idle persons. Sat up late, rejoiced on my part, as I laid myself on my metallic bed, at the brightness of the atmosphere (no thunder clouds).

“24th.—A very small and fragile boat procured, in which Mr. P—— embarked, reporting himself a good swimmer. Cross-line arranged in battle order. In a short time many customers, small and large trout—the latter not fed in proportion to their length—but no salmon. My incredulity in-

creased, but determined on another kind of trial in the way of trolling, and discovered that small trout (alias pinkeens) were to be had in the river—the middle-sized trout pretty good. As usual, an excellent dinner, with its adjuncts. Sat up late, but nothing in the way of excess. The atmosphere clear, which vexed Mr. P——, but was a source of great satisfaction to me, as I was able thereby to stick to my formidable bedstead with an easy mind. Excellent sleep—rather too comfortable, if possible.

“24th.—Breakfast, as usual, capital—reluctant to take porter, but was wrought on, and complied at last. Trolled the lake—got a pull, which Mr. P—— pronounced to be a weed; differed from him. In a short time had a fish fast, which proved to be a large slat trout. In some short time after another. Again tried the cross-line—caught



many large and small trout, but no salmon. I then most positively asserted that the fish supposed to be salmon were those large, ill-recovered trout which had not water to bring them to the sea.

“About three o'clock went to view Lough Doolagh ; on our way pointed out a regular trap for catching salmon, and recommended its demolition, to which the natives seemed much averse ; but it was insisted on, and dispositions made accordingly, which were not carried into effect for two days after. Determined on fishing Lough Doolagh next morning in every way ; and the boats accordingly ordered up. Returned, and again tried the small lake—equal success, but no salmon—Mr. P—— very expert at the cross-line, and quite an accomplished angler. Dinner late, which I like—felt dissatisfied at having every thing my own way—no opposition or contradiction. Such a state

of things could not have occurred if J——  
H—— and I had been together.

“The natives looked on me as a wonder in the way of angling, and were astonished at our various arrangements ; but were positive that salmon were in the lakes, which I could not be prevailed on to believe. Large-sized Inchiquin flies much the best. A classical dissertation after dinner. Achilles and Sylla, in my opinion, the finest characters in antiquity. They always performed their promises, and helped their friends. Rare virtues both. Night, stormy and cool, but no sign of rain or thunder, much to my comfort. Slept soundly upon my conductor.

“ 25th.—Breakfast—porter again—boats not up early—went into the library—read records of criminal trials during the reigns of the Guelphs—mere registers of slaughter, hanging the cure for all offences. Legisla-

tors in those days certainly a bloody race—one girl hanged for cutting off her mistress's pocket—others for having goods in their hands which they had *not* taken away—others for stealing bread—to say nothing of their laws of violated majesty (the Habeas Corpus suspension acts). Tiberius's and Nero's not a bit better. Persons bit by mad dogs, smothered between beds—nothing but brute force resorted to on all occasions. But why do I wonder at all this? Have I not witnessed a sufficiency of wickedness and mischief of the same kind in my own days, and during Tory rule?

“Invasion of Lough Doolough—surrounded by stupendous peaks, or rather cliffs, for in many parts they are not accessible. An eyrie in one of them, in which saw two eagles. Wind south, and strong, but sky very bright. Dropped down with the cross-

line—soon full of small fish. Mr. P—— stuck to the small boat, in order that, in case of accident, he might have a short distance to swim. Plagued with small fish—the line constantly full of them. Did not think it worth while to take them in, but on one point we had a heavy pull. The surf great—did not mind our hits—had a large fish of some kind, which took the line deep, and finally took away the fly. Dropped to the end of the lake, which is nearly three miles in length, and went to another pretty large one above it, in which we killed a few pinkeens off the shore.

These lakes must be most plentifully stocked with salmon and white trout in July, August, and September, when the water is high. It is said that there are some very large brown trout, too; but at the time I write of, I do not think there was

any stock of good fish in any of them, evidently from the want of water to admit them, and to suffer the slat trout to depart ; for it may be depended on as a certainty that, like the salmon, the white trout will not recover in fresh water after spawning, without again getting to the sea, and that, though they may be classed under the genus *trutta*, yet they are a different species from the lake trout altogether.

“ The day continuing bright and stormy, refreshed ourselves, and fished some points reported as salmon lodges, but without effect —after which trolled up the lake, and caught three or four trout, none exceeding a pound weight. Surely if there were salmon or large brown trout, we could not have failed to catch them with either fly or bait. Returned late to dinner, which was, as usual, excellent. Determined for the next day on seeing many sheep washed belonging

to the Marquis of Sligo, and having the trap demolished.

“Arrival of Mr. P——’s fishing tackle, for which, I must own, I felt some anxiety, judging that anglers are not now as primitive and honest as in Izaak Walton’s days. Insisted on a glass of punch, which was conceded. Still no sign of rain, beyond one little shower. Mr. P—— in despair. Another happy night in the gilt bedstead.

“26th.—Walked to the head of the river, where the sheep were washed—a very poor, small-sized stock. The trap destroyed, and the frame ordered to be burnt. Again tried Lough Doolough, but met the same kind of sport as before. Preparations for retreat from Delphi. Mr. P. got letters announcing the marriage of one of his brothers to a very amiable and beautiful young woman, and a request from another of his brothers to meet him at his shooting-lodge, Tourma-

keady, on which he proposed that I should go there with him, which I very reluctantly refused, there being nothing I wished for more than a couple of days' fishing on Lough Mask.

“Boats ordered down ; again cross-fished the little lake ; stood on the shore, and hauled in several fish, such as I have described, and am positive that if there were any salmon in the lake, we must have seen them in some way or other.

“Met the Roman Catholic curate walking near the lake ; he was asked to dine, and promised to come in the evening ; came, and staid pretty late, but not beyond canonical hours. Another request from Mr. P—— to go to Tourmakeady ; declined, with a statement, on my part, that I should find my way back very well ; when my excellent friend declared for going at five next morning, in order to meet Bianconi's car near

Flyn's, and gave additional directions that a car should meet us at the other side of Bundora ferry at six, A.M.

“Late in bed, nearly one o'clock on Sunday morning, to be up at cock-crow : how this order was obeyed will be seen. I awoke at four—no one has ever been early enough to waken me, I being always the first to start on any expedition—called Mr. P——, who wished for another sleep, but shortly after started up ; and having had our luggage stowed on a car, started for Bundora.

“Not a mortal stirring in the lodge till roused by me. Wind, a gale from the east ; ferry rough, but a good sea boat, and excellent rowers ; crossed pleasantly, with a little splashing : like the water, but abhor precipices and unfenced roads. Started for Maam, where we snatched a hasty breakfast, and took a fresh horse to meet the car ; the horse a bad one and restive—driver obliged



to walk and run with him a considerable way. Were fortunately in time for the car, on which was Mr. Pigot, a most agreeable and gentlemanlike young man, and, I presume, a good angler, having fished in Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, and many other parts of the Continent. He stated that he had been prevented fishing at Ballinahinch ; but here some mistake must have occurred, as all accounts seem to testify to the hospitality of Mr. Martin, and, in his absence, of his sister, an acquaintance of our friend, Michael Finucane, who speaks in the highest terms of her. Much chat with Mr. Pigot. Anglers, and sportsmen of all kinds, very quickly amalgamate ; they seldom put on the cold, uncomfortable reserve, which so often keeps bipeds apart. Great sameness in our route to Galway. Pressed to dine by Mr. P—— ; thought it too early for dinner—hate early dinners. Took leave of

Mr. P——, and felt glorified at being able to persuade him to abstain from going to Tourmakeady, and at my own fortitude in giving up a pleasant party. Dined at about eight, and went to bed at nine, a very unusual hour for me.

“28th.—Eleven, A.M.—Off for Ennis in the mail, in company with a dumb officer of the Royal Engineers, Lieutenant B—— and a young gentleman, Mr. Martin, also an angler—agreeable and conversable; conclude the engineer was not an angler; suppose him half Dutch, half German. Mr. Martin left us near Gort, and my austere companion continued wrapt up in his solitary importance till we reached Ennis, without any effort on my part to disturb his taciturnity.”

Here ends the history of my first trip to Connemara—originally addressed in an epistolary form to one of the best anglers

in the kingdom, J—— H——, who, I did imagine, would feel at least grateful for the valuable remarks it contains on the different species of trout, as well as for the pleasure I supposed he would derive from the perusal of my tour. But, oh, brother anglers, and good fellows of all kinds and sorts, prepare to be shocked and mortified ! In the reply which I received to this simple narrative, dispatched in the fullness and simplicity of my heart, my friend declared, under his proper signature, that it was nothing more or less than—“ *A Record of Iniquity !* ” Oh, J——, what have you not to answer for ? Never will I write another journal !

## CHAPTER XIX.

## RETURN TO DELPHI.

ABOUT the latter end of August, 1838, I met Mr. P —— at Galway, on our route to Delphi. And let me here recommend travellers going the Maam road, to have a car ordered from the Maam hotel, to meet them at the cross-road, within two miles of Flyn's, unless they prefer seeing a very fine girl, (Miss Flyn,) which is a *rara avis* in Connemara. By this means they will save five miles of road, besides the probable chance of not getting a car at Flyn's—a thing not unlikely to happen. But to return.

We arrived safe, with a vast baggage, all right, our arrival having been expected ;

appetites good, and wherewithal of what was excellent to satisfy them ; meats, wines, sauces abundant ; beds excellent, and a change of bedstead for me, from the ornamental brass one, already dwelt, as well as slept on, to one more attractive to me, and less to the lightning. Next day we found the waters risen—floods had come on ; the old slat trout swept down, and fresh fish in the river, which we tried, and found a tolerable share of small salmon (peal) running. Mr. P—— killed two or three ; I only caught one, nor was I very desirous to take them, as they were declining in condition. I observed that the water is scarcely ever muddy here, the principal streams running from fine clear lakes.

Whoever designated this place Delphi had a clear head and a classical vein. The two rocks of Parnassus are here represented, with a spare one besides, and the waters of

Helicon cannot be purer than those which flow past us. Quere—are there trout and salmon near Parnassus? If not, I renounce the oracular, and stick to our Irish Delphi; and as for mountains, those of classic song may be more difficult to ascend, but the Mayo ones are high enough for me. We next tried the small lake, and caught a considerable quantity of fine-sized trout, in excellent condition. My observations with respect to the fish on my former visit I now found verified—that we were then catching fish which had not water to go down, and that there was not water to bring in the fresh ones. We were often bothered with the gubbawns, (very small-sized trout, which are said to grow no bigger,) but killed a salmon with a little fry on the lake. In a day or two we were joined by Mr. D——P——, who began to angle with me, saying he had never taken a trout bigger than a

Wicklow pinkeen. In a short time he killed a trout of about a pound weight, and very soon after one of at least three pounds, with which he was much delighted. He was now regularly initiated, and very quickly became an adept, and is now for ever and evermore, what every good man will be, or ought to be, an excellent angler and a right good fellow.

He was inducted, in short, into the entire *arcana* of angling : could hand-fish, cross-fish, and troll ; and proved himself handy, quick, and intellectual ; but all this our brother J——, though as great a transgressor as any of us, would, no doubt, call “ a record of iniquity.” Mr. D—— P—— killed on a subsequent day three peal on the river, and I only one ; so that my pupil, now a proficient, outdid his master at his own craft.

I have already said that Delphi could be

made the best angling spot in Ireland. I would first propose that the lower stony rapids should be cleared. I don't speak as to the large rocks, which I would leave untouched, but I would deepen the passage close to the sea, and several of the good streams. I would also, on the upper part of the small lake, where the river flows in, make two strong stone piers, grooved for the purpose, into which, when I wanted a prime day's sport, I would put an iron grate, removable at pleasure, and which, when no longer necessary, might be taken up, and the fish suffered to go to the upper lakes. The uppermost of these we did not fish, though, as I then conjectured, and since found to be the case, the best and largest fish were to be taken there.

We were at one time within a little distance of this upper lake in our boats, but suffered ourselves to be controlled and di-



rected by stupid country fellows, instead of judging for ourselves from its locality, and from the fact, that fish, particularly salmon, go as high as they can.

On a drizzling, moist evening we were fishing the small lake, near which the road passes, when we were agreeably surprised by the appearance of two ladies, on their route to the lodge, attended by a single squire, of the name of Jennings. They had come from Tourmakeady, across the mountains, a distance of fifteen miles, on palfreys, (I would not say ponies,) with this simple countryman alone to guide and protect them. This circumstance must remind us of the days of Brian the Brave, when beautiful virgins could travel alone, with purses of gold, throughout the land—at least, every where, I presume, except in the county Tipperary.

We were most happy to see the ladies,

with whom we were to return to Tourma-keady. They were quite astonished at the quantity of fish we were killing, and the many romantic and natural beauties of the place. On one occasion I witnessed more patience and resignation in a young lady than I was prepared for.

Opposite Delphi, and at the other side of the lake, is a high crag, wooded and difficult of access. One of these ladies, who is perfectly conversant in the art of taking views from nature, requested to be landed on this crag, which was at once complied with. We went up the lake, and were killing fish very fast, when after some time, she called for us ; but in our way an embargo was laid on our progress, by the authority of several large fish. We at last came to her relief, and found she had been most severely bitten by black insects, closely resembling the American mosquito, and very nearly as venomous.

This unexpected infliction was borne with the greatest good temper—no complaints or reproaches ; even next day, when her face had painfully swelled, not so much as an allusion was made by her to the loitering which brought her into this sad condition. Here was indeed a triumph of temper ! Nor had she the satisfaction of a partnership in her mishap, her fair companion having declined to accompany her.

During our stay, Lord W—— and some Scotchmen, who, it is to be presumed, do not intend revisiting the land of meal, paid us a visit, and the latter forthwith modestly proposed stretching their thin stop-nets across Killery bay ; a favour which, I need scarcely say, was promptly declined.

The first decline of salmon-fishing may be dated from the introduction of stop-nets into this country ; now the run of fish is not by any means so large as it was for-

merly. I have been informed, by a very judicious person, that when the scull of salmon is broken before reaching to certain points in the bays and rivers, they are apt to return to the ocean, and seek other inlets. But however this may be, of one thing I am convinced, that if this mode of taking salmon is not put a stop to, there will be shortly an end to the species, and, therefore, to the sport.

We killed many trout on the middle lake, (Doolough,) and some very fine ones, the largest, however, not exceeding six pounds, though they have been taken of much larger size. The previous season one was killed of eight pounds—it took an hour to kill it, but, unless the tackling was very slight, I should have considered twenty minutes sufficient. During our stay we killed upwards of three hundred trout, and eleven salmon.

From the observations I have made, I

should say that the months of June, July, and August are the best for Delphi ; and I think, from the Killery bay being so sheltered, that several salmon in high water face it early, for which reason I have recommended the iron grate, (to prevent their getting to the upper lakes,)—a device which should be used, however, only immediately before an intended visit. Another reason I have for not expecting much in these waters late in the season is, that they are deficient in food for the fish ; there are few weeds, a cold stony soil, and except the little gubbawns, or trout fry, I don't see what the fish would have to eat : and my opinion is so far verified, that we killed several trout long enough to weigh seven or eight pounds, which, nevertheless, did not exceed five.

To sum up, Delphi is a beautifully wooded and watered spot ; perfectly sheltered from

all winds ; a crystal stream ; nice vegetable garden ; three fine lakes ; house stocked with all necessaries and conveniences ; excellent small mutton ; on the mountains—grouse, hares, and rabbits ; and if an angler has the good fortune to meet the master of this delicious spot at home——but here I forbear.

The poor of this district have no place of worship much nearer than Westport, nearly twenty miles distant, unless they choose to go to Achill island, where it is said there are some missionaries endeavouring to “convert” the “*Christians*.” Last May, when this neighbourhood was visited, as it occasionally is, by the priest or his curate, the latter came in after dinner, to which he had been invited, and described the privations of his flock ; informing us that some years before, when the typhus fever raged, many of the inhabitants perished for want

of the commonest medicine and attendance.

These are awful considerations. No place of worship ! No doctors ! No apothecaries ! On our departure at that time, and since, orders were given to afford the priest and his curate every facility in the way of sporting, and to refuse them nothing the house or land could afford ; and those instructions were given to Mr. Brown, the steward, at whose house the priest usually sojourned, when passing that way. Mr. Brown is married, and has a large family, who are amiable and obliging.

We now prepared for Tourmakeady. Pal freys and ponies were provided for ladies, gentlemen, and squire Jennings ; when, alas ! I received a summons to Clare, on particular and unavoidable business, and was obliged to relinquish the pleasures of this agreeable society, and the prospect of sacrificing

largely to the organ of destructiveness, on Lough Mask, and, after crossing the bay, of treading my course alone through the wilds of Connemara. The morning was fine, the sea unruffled—no unnecessary timidity in our fair companions. I was landed at Joyce's side—bid a sorrowful adieu ; and so ended my second trip to Delphi.



## CHAPTER XX.

DISAGREEABLE JOURNEY TO GLANDELOUGH AND DERRY-CLARE. TWO DAYS' TOLERABLE ANGLING, ETC.

AT Joyce's, or, I believe, now "Reilly's," I got a bad horse, and a rascal who till then, as he confessed, never drove a car. A pretty mess I found myself in, nearly upset two or three times. A snail's pace to Maam, (eight miles,) where I counted on getting a fresh horse and car, to enable me to overtake Bianconi's car to Galway ; but neither were to be had ; and it was by the greatest persuasion that I at last induced the fellow to bring me to the turn of the road, four miles farther ; which on having reached, I found that the car to and from Clifden had passed. Not a step farther

would my fellow go ; and I was left with my baggage on the road : so I thought it better to push on to Flyn's on foot, and fortunately got a labourer to carry part of my kit, taking the remainder myself.

I arrived in a most violent heat, but met with the utmost attention from the handsome Miss Flyn, (since married,) who informed me that the three Mr. H——s were within a few miles of me, at a fine sporting lodge belonging to Dean Mahon, which they had taken for the season.

Here was a dilemma. I had declined going to Tourmakeady ; and, thinks I to myself, is it right to go to any other house ? Again, here are three friends and companions within a short distance, and ought I to leave Connemara without seeing and having one night's converse with persons I value so highly ? At all events I cannot stir till eleven to-morrow. In short, I at

length made up my mind, and ordered Mr. Flyn to prepare for Glandelough, where I arrived about six P.M. The proprietors were fishing at Lough Inagh ; but I met Mr. Edward George, since dead, who received me with that distinguished urbanity and politeness which is the characteristic mark of true and genuine worth.

We were not acquainted before, but were very shortly unrestrained. He brought me to the top of a hill, from whence the most advantageous view of this very pretty place is obtained. A fine and rather extensive lake, a handsome house, and a great deal of plantation. The house just on the border of the lake. We shortly joined our friends, who were most happy to see me, and sat down to dinner in excellent humour. The laugh, the joke, the story went round. I was, as usual, attacked, and would have found a difficulty in defending myself, but

for the assistance of my new ally, Mr. George.

How I longed for the support of the friends I had left ! and how their absence was regretted by my entertainers ! If it were possible that the two parties could have met in one house, an array of talent, wit, and good humour would have been assembled, which it would be difficult to match.

It was determined that Derryclare and Lough Inagh should be tried the next day, two for each lake. I had forgotten my rod at Flyn's, but had choice of many, and selected a very small socket rod of Mr. George's, provided with a multiplying wheel, which I was in hopes of breaking, if I got hold of a large fish. Counsellor G——, also one of my acquaintances, and a most excellent and agreeable man, and one of the young Mr. M——s, a good angler and fly-tier, were of

our party, and I believe were to fish Glan-delough. After breakfast R—— H—— and I set off for Derryclare. This is rather a series of long narrow lakes, than one continuous lake, and lies at the foot of one of those steep mountains called the Twelve Pins. We had little wind, and I intimated an intention of walking to its top, till admonished that the distance was three miles, which intelligence nipped my pedestrianism in the bud.

We killed a good many tolerable sized trout, but nothing equal to the run of those at Delphi, or Doolough. I practised divers impositions on R—— H——, which I dare not do with his brother, Mr. J——, but my rod was too small, and I had not the satisfaction of hooking a salmon or large trout to try the stuff of the multiplier. The other party were on Lough Inagh, and had very middling sport. Next day, (for I had no chance of

getting away,) it was agreed that J—— and I should fish together, so I provided a very neat, good rod of Mr. W——'s ; and I must say, that Glendalough was never better fished than on that day. On one occasion J—— rose a fine trout, and I, as if instinctively, at once had my fly over him ; on which he essayed to break my rod, at the same time warning me against a repetition of my misconduct. He caught a salmon, in excellent season, about nine pounds weight, and let him go. I think he was a newer fish than any we met at Delphi. I was in the head of the boat, and in a corner of the lake near some rushes, he had the boat backed against the wind, (though he had no right to do so,) and killed three fine trout, which were certainly my due, but I suffered him to progress in his iniquity, for the pleasure of upbraiding him with it. On my giving him the reason of my concession of right, he laughed

heartily, saying I had often served him the same way on Inchiquin—this, however, I utterly deny.

There cannot be a better angler for trout, pike, or salmon, than he is ; but he is a rogue, and addicted to mischievous tricks, many instances of which I could, and perhaps will, give. At all events, our mode of angling and throwing the line, astonished the rowers. Either on that or the next day, I forget which, I killed, with an Inchiquin dropper, on four hairs, a salmon about eight pounds weight, and let him go—he was by no means so good as the last killed. I consider Glendalough a much better lake than Derryclare, and the fish better sized ; but they are all on the decline, for when the fish are good and in season, they are prevented going up ; and when they are spent and declining, of what use are they ? Then again, the slat salmon and trout, as I am

told, are kept perishing above Mr. Martin's weir, and not suffered to go down.

Here is the fable of the goose that laid the golden eggs realized. Surely, those slat if let down in time would return to the very river they had left, in less than a month, fine recovered fish, and bring ten-fold benefit to the owner ; in fact, until the practice of opening a gap in the weir is adopted from Saturday night to Monday morning, (which is rendered imperative by law,) it is neither the interest, nor should it be the wish of any gentleman, to aid in the preservation of any river on which such a scandalous and mischievous monopoly is suffered to exist.

The Inchiquin and Dromore flies are excellent on all these lakes ; and so is the grey salmon fly, and several of the Dublin fancy ones. These waters all abound with small fish, and it is said there are some very large



brown trout in them too. Of this latter kind I did not see any, but Mr. W—— H—— caught one at Glendalough, three and a half pounds weight, said to be a most excellent fish. I should think very small fry, or perhaps shrimps, would be the most certain way of taking them.

The rods for lake-fishing need not exceed fourteen or fifteen feet ; for salmon-fishing on the rivers, a little longer, but not to exceed seventeen feet. I am sorry to observe that at Glendalough the anglers used large clumsy knots to their wheel-lines, instead of having nice looped three-gut links. Such conduct would not be tolerated at Delphi, except in case of necessity, or of the sudden abstraction of a piece of the wheel-line—a possible occurrence during hard dragging, or what we would call “bull work.”

The roads here are good, except the Maam side, which is not to be compared to the

Clifden line ; but I have endeavoured to warn travellers to be provided against contingencies on their respective routes, particularly if they purpose deviating from the mail track.

Mr. Bianconi's cars and horses are first-rate, and the drivers sober and diligent ; the country romantic, and well worth seeing ; a great deal of this vast tract being, besides, easily reclaimable, and possessing within itself ample means of improvement. So much for what I have seen of Connemara. If Mr. Martin should chance to see what I have written, I hope it may so far influence him, as that the result may ensure good to himself, be productive of additional amusement to travellers and sportsmen, and create a desire for further research into the capabilities of this interesting and long-neglected country.

My business at home being urgent, I at

last took leave of those friends endeared to me by so many pleasant recollections, and met the car opposite Glendalough pretty early in the morning, after a severe attack from the mosquitoes, to combat which I was obliged in my own defence to resort to smoking, an accomplishment I learned late in life, having once held it in the greatest abhorrence.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE "WALLS OF TROY," AND A PROSPECTIVE TOUR.

WE were one evening on a hill which overlooked a circular plantation near the river. Mr. P—— asked me if I could tell what this was ; I replied that I could not even guess ; so away we went to explore it. It was surrounded by several walks, and a very deep narrow trench bounding each walk, there being four or five lines of walks and trenches. We walked round and round, and when we got near the river, where we expected to get out, there was no egress. It was getting late, and after some difficulty, having fortunately taken a pretty correct observation of the place of entrance, we made our way to the road. During our exploring, I had

slipped once or twice as if something had tripped me, but did not mind it.

Next day when Mr. Browne, the steward, was questioned as to the place, he raised up his head and eyes exclaiming, "O Lord ! what brought ye into that place, it is called the Walls of Troy, and ye had great luck that we had not to draw ye forth by ropes, for all those narrow walks are undermined at every three or four yards ! Several ladies, indulging in the curiosity so natural to their sex, have slipped into these traps ; Mr. St. George himself slipped in, and we had to get long boards across the different drains, and ropes to lug him out." Then turning to me, " This was an invention of a countryman of yours of the name of Burke, a very ingenious but mischievous fellow, who formed this place when the Marquis of Sligo was in the habit of staying here, and it was Burke's greatest pleasure to send men and women into it, on some frivolous pre-

tence, and they had regularly to be lugged out with ropes."

How we escaped I cannot say, but suppose the roots of the grass had attained a kind of consistency capable of sustaining a tolerable weight, nor did we make any further experimental trips to the labyrinth.

We were informed that Burke still lives and resides in Westport ; he has become a miser, and has a little boat, in which he alone can fish, which he puts on a car drawn by an ass, and goes to the lakes in his neighbourhood. Gallagher, the fisherman now employed at Delphi-lodge, assisted at the making of the labyrinth, and can put visitors on their guard against its dangers.

As it is more than probable that this book may be read even by strangers when I am no more, I will endeavour to point out a course by which entertainment and a knowledge of part of this fine island may be

agreeably obtained ; nor will I recommend the beaten track of Killarney, the Giant's Causeway, Glengariff, or such other places, to which travellers almost always resort—My object is to take fresh ground.

I suppose you a gentleman, with one or two respectable letters of introduction to some Dublin friend or friends, which will procure you additional ones on your route ; if an angler, so much the better ; then, in the first place, resolve to be well tempered, or at least not to be the reverse, without very cogent reason ; take the fly-boat from Portobello to Shannon-harbour, (I do not recommend the night boat) ; you will arrive at the harbour at six P.M. ; your dinner will be tolerable, your bed excellent, and you can sleep until seven the next morning. Have a sharp eye to your luggage at the different changes. You embark in a small steamer, and while you are in this said steamer, you

may either breakfast, shut your eyes and sleep, or read a novel or newspaper, until you come to the bridge of Portumna, for your passage is through flat savannahs, not much relieved by any very interesting object.

At Portumna, you get into a large and fine steamer which conveys you to Killaloe, through a splendid lake, nearly thirty miles in length, and in breadth from eleven to five or six miles : of the beauties of this lake and its scenery you will judge, and if the weather be fine, you will have additional pleasure in the many splendid views this magnificent sheet of water affords.

You will arrive at Killaloe in full time for dinner, after which you may angle, if in summer, until nine or ten o'clock ; for there is very good trout-fishing in the streams, and the salmon-fishing is not bad, particularly in the Bishop's royalty, from whom permission to fish may probably be easily



obtained. If the next day be Sunday, and that his lordship preaches, 'twill be well worth your while to hear him, for he is an excellent preacher, and does not indulge in controversial lectures, being, by all I can learn, by no means one of those who have studied in the "*daily*" school. If you like the fishing at Killaloe, or up the large lake with the cross line, you can pass two or three days pleasantly enough, and it is likely have good sport. When you purpose moving on to Limerick, do not go in the canal boat, but hire a good fishing cot, and have good boatmen, who will take you to O'Brien's bridge, and from thence to Castleconnell; there is tolerable angling the greater part of the way, and you can enjoy the scenery at your leisure. If you like Castleconnell, which is a beautiful village, stay and fish there, and if you wish for or need spa water, you can drink plenty of it. When you have had

enough of this locality, go by water by all means to Limerick, first fishing as many of the streams of Donass as you get permission to exercise your piscatory propensities on ; and as the gentry are generally more civil to strangers than to their immediate neighbours, it is more than likely that you will be seldom refused angling leave for a day or two in some of the best courses, with all which the cotmen are conversant, and if duly noticed, are provided with tolerable tackle for trout and salmon, which with your own materials, with which you will be in some measure supplied, will answer all your purposes.

When you arrive at the far-famed city of Limerick, your attention will necessarily be directed to every subject worthy of observation, and among these I will only point out one, leaving you to your proper discretion on all other points. That object is the famous

stone of the violated treaty—it lies at the Clare side of Thomond bridge, deeply imbedded in the ground ; and, unlike the London monument, which

“ Like a tall bully lifts his head and *lies*,”

the treaty stone tells the melancholy truth, and remains a monument of disgraceful perfidy.

When you are tired of Limerick, go in the steam boat to Kilrush, and I am sure that you will be delighted with the scenery at both sides of the Shannon. You will perceive that I have not attempted to describe natural scenery ; judge for yourself, give your imagination free scope, and I am convinced you will be gratified : particularly if you do not prefer the awful and tremendous to the agreeable and delightful ; but even if you should aspire to the dreadful and the terrific, I hope to satisfy you before our tour is at an end.

While at Kilrush, you will naturally pay a visit to the island of Scattery, where any number of vessels may lie at anchor ; and if you have a desire to visit the light-house at Loop-head, which is about thirty miles farther at the mouth of this fine river, you may please yourself ; but I recommend that you do not go in an undecked sail-boat, by any means, as the sea is both rough and dangerous.

Within a few miles of Kilrush is Kilkee, a fine watering place, the estate of Mr. M'Donnell, and much frequented in the summer months by many families from Tipperary and Limerick.

I have said nothing of hotels. They are good at Killaloe and Limerick. I cannot say what they are at Castleconnell, but at Kilrush and Kilkee they are well enough ; and in the country parts, where there are no hotels, the gentry and the priests are hospi-

table, and as the latter generally have a spare bed for their sisters or nieces, there is little to be apprehended by a genteel visitor on the score of accommodation in even remote places, hospitality being the order of the day every where, and the worst that can happen, a trifling privation for a night or two.

From Kilkee I would travel along the Atlantic at all hazards to Miltown, and a wild part of the world it is—vast cliffs the whole way to Baltard, and no trees. An American cast away on this coast declared it to be the finest improved country in the world—not a tree to the water's edge. The "clearance" is here the work of nature, as not a tree will grow on the Malbay coast without land shelter. At Baltard, a very high cliff overhanging the sea is crowned by a picturesque tower. On the whole line of coast to the bay of Galway, an awful sea runs, there being no intermediate land

between it and America, nearly three thousand miles—indeed, I consider it the greatest surf that the world can show, and any vessel that ever gets embayed among the breakers is sure to be lost. Between Baltard and Miltown is a very great curiosity not hitherto noticed : it is a natural high barrier of loose stones, thrown up, as it were, by the sea, and about half a mile in length, the sea at one side, and a considerable lake at the other, and but for this natural barrier, the entire land in its neighbourhood would be inundated by every tide ; the stones are perfectly smooth ; and in great storms, the sea breaks over into the lake ; it can be safely ridden—nay even galloped on, and I have never heard of any accident occurring. The outlet of the lake into the sea often forms a great current, and is then unsafe to cross. From this place to Miltown is a fine ride or drive, and the roads are in general very good.

At Miltown are a hotel, baths, and several gentlemen residing, most of whom are hospitable, in the true sense of the word. In the neighbourhood is a large village, a mile from the baths, where the road leads to Lahinch, the estate of the late Andrew Stacpoole, an excellent man, beloved by all classes, whose loss has been most generally felt. At Lahinch every one is hospitable—this truly Christian virtue prevails in the entire district, and excuses many failings. It is, moreover, a fine bathing place, having a good strand and fine waves ; and all the visitors, men and women, bathe, for the most part, at no very great distance from one another, for there are particular times of the tide when bathing is alone agreeable, and it is then taken advantage of without any fastidiousness or false delicacy on the part of men or women.

From Lahinch, looking to the north, you

behold a spectacle not often to be witnessed in Ireland, a very large and extensive tract of land, studded with neat, well-slated cottages, each cottage having cow-house, piggery, and kitchen-garden belonging to it, and perfect neatness and cleanliness being prevalent throughout them all. Nearly in the centre of this assemblage of dwellings is Birchfield, the fine and beautifully-situated residence of Cornelius O'Brien, one of the M. P.'s for the county, to whom the entire tract of land above described belongs, being a part of his estate—on which there are two, or I believe three, very excellent mansions besides, which have been lately built by Mr. O'Brien, and capable of accommodating large families. Mr. O'Brien resides almost entirely at Birchfield; a most excellent and convenient house it is, possessing a great desideratum in a fine and well-assorted library, suited to all manner of tastes. Here



every gentleman is welcome ; and fastidious indeed a man must be who is not pleased and gratified by the reception he meets at Birchfield, one of the most hospitable and well-kept houses in Clare.

And now, if you are for the awful and sublime, go from Birchfield, and see Moher cliffs (two miles distant) with fear and trembling, for there are flagged steps, and a parapet, to the very edge of the cliffs, which I will not attempt to describe in prose or verse, further than that they are, I am convinced, far the most tremendous in the three kingdoms—frowning, as it were, over the vast Atlantic, which stretches away uninterruptedly to America ; but in the direction of the bay of Galway, the eye is a little relieved by the three Isles of Arran, which are only three or four leagues from the main land. On the top of one of the cliffs is a fine tower, capable of affording

shelter to visitors, and where, in unfavourable weather, they may dine ; and at a little distance is a fine set of stables and coach-houses, all built by Mr. O'Brien for the accommodation of his friends and guests, and such travellers as visit him : in hazy weather the view of these cliffs is magnificent—the top of them seem as if suspended from the clouds.

From the Cliffs to Doolin, the seat of Major M'Namara, M. P., is only three or four miles, and if you are so fortunate as to find the Major, or his son, Captain Francis, at home, you will be most lucky, and likely to be entertained in the most agreeable manner ; the Captain is a right good fellow, admired and liked by all bipeds, male and female, and, having been ever in the best society, his acquaintance is doubly desirable.

From Doolin to the new quay in Bureen

is your route ; of this I know nothing, but the gentry are reported to vie with those I have met in the spirit of hospitality ; and in your direct road lives George M'Namara, brother to the major—a most excellent country gentleman, one who lives well, and is happy to show strangers every civility in his power.

At the new quay you can embark in a good sail boat for Galway, where if you like to angle you may divert yourself for a day or two ; from thence pursue your route, on Bianconi's car, to Ballynahinch, the seat of Mr. Martin, M. P., where, if you have permission, (and that is not difficult to obtain), you will have excellent salmon and white-trout fishing. The views of lake, river, and mountain, in this day's journey, are delightful. When you leave Ballinahinch, come round by Killery Bay to Bundora ferry, and in this journey the scenery and views are

not to be surpassed, and scarcely equalled by any in Ireland, or perhaps elsewhere. You will perceive that I aim little at description, contenting myself with pointing out what is to be seen, and leaving it to affect you as it may.

At Bundora I recommend that you cross Killery Bay (about a mile over), and see Delphi, already spoken of as the summer lodge of the Lord Bishop of Tuam and his brothers ; and I wish you no better luck than to find any of them at their residence, where, particularly if an angler, you will find every thing to your mind.

From Delphi to Westport is about twenty miles by the existing road ; but it was in contemplation when I was last there, to take a level along the base of some tremendous mountains, which would shorten the road three or four miles. Wonderful it is what a propensity the Irish have ever had to make

roads over mountainous tracts, and abandon level lines ; but such has been their invariable practice until within some few years, when judicious engineers have taken matters into their hands.

At Westport is an excellent hotel ; the mail goes each day to Dublin. I leave you to your proper discretion either to return to the metropolis ; to take a car to Ballinrobe, and come round between Lough Carra and Lough Mask, in which drive much interesting country may be seen ; or to cross Lough Mask to Ballinrobe, which you must not attempt, except in a good boat. And I now conclude, merely observing, that the traveller may be as fully amused in the tour which I recommend, as if he had been spending his money in Germany, Holland, or Italy, sleeping under, instead of over beds, learning low Dutch and high German, riding on mules with his legs

over precipices—perhaps subjected to the attacks of banditti, or the more gentle style of robbery called gambling, or play—not to take into consideration how paramount a duty it is, that every rational being should know something of the manners, habits, and customs of the people of his native soil, or of those ruled by the same laws and government.

This long chapter may not be considered quite to the point, but I have thought that many of my readers may be as well employed in reading this prospective tour, as if they were suffering their imaginations to gloat over the various productions of the many “*male and female FLESH FLIES*” which inundate these countries with their productions, and which have inordinately increased the price of paper, without a proportionate profit to the minds of their readers.

Let it not be supposed that I have a ge-

neral objection to all novels—far from it ; many of them present true and vivid pictures of life as it is, but many more are—*what you may please to call them.*

## CHAPTER XXII.

BLACKWATER—LISMORE—ANECDOTE OF MR. PHILIPS.

(*Written in 1840.*)

HERE is another of those destructive monopolies which I have alluded to—a great weir across this fine, and, but for the interruption, navigable river.

From the 10th of February to the 10th of September it is hermetically sealed, and not a fish suffered to go up or down! It is astonishing how the gentry of the country permit such a nuisance, without at least insisting on the King's Gap being opened from six o'clock on Saturday evening to six o'clock on Monday morning; and still more surprising that that magnificent nobleman, the Duke of Devonshire, sanctions the abuse.



It is even considered a compliment to get a salmon at six pence a pound ; and hence it often happens that fish out of season are sold to unwary purchasers. The large towns of Mallow, Fermoy, Lismore, and many others, and even his own tenantry, are thus left to the mercy or caprice of the monopolist, who packs up the fish in coffers, and sends them off to England in hundreds, but in not nearly such large quantities as were said to be taken some years ago, for the very practice must defeat its object. I am convinced if the Duke were made aware of these facts, that means would be taken by him to abate the evil. It is even considered a compliment to suffer gentlemen to fish on their own grounds, adjoining the banks of this fine river.

There is also another nuisance farther down the river, at Mr. Smith's, of Ballintrea—viz., standing-nets and stop-nets ; if

I may call iron or copper-wire nets by that name. And here is an evasion of a positive act of parliament, which, like many other of our acts of parliament, is not worth a farthing, from its complexity, and its different provisos and conditions. I wish our legislators would study Gulliver's voyage to Brobdingnag ; it would give them some useful hints as to the method of framing acts of parliament, which ought to be direct, positive, and intelligible.

The currents on this river are for the most part rapid, but free from rocks or stumps, so that with a sufficiency of good line there is no losing a fish, except through mismanagement, or else because the angler is of the cat kind, tenacious of wetting his feet ; for the fish must be often followed from one stream to another.

The rods should be from eighteen to twenty feet in length, and of the description I have

already recommended—namely, strong, with little spring in the butt, for about two feet above the wheel. Much larger are used here—some twenty-seven or twenty-eight feet in length—but they are cumbrous, unwieldy, and ineffective, without a fair wind ; for as to throwing against a wind it is out of the question. The principle on which they are used is also, I think, erroneous—viz., keeping the fly over a fish's head ; as if a salmon, when intent on taking, will not follow the fly.

I will now proceed to recommend the kind of salmon flies I have found to answer best. It is, in broken weather, one of the muddiest rivers in the world, from the vast number of mountain-streams it receives in its course, and sometimes will not clear in a week, which is a great vexation to an angler. In spring, when it becomes nearly of a beer-colour, fish with a large fly, on

three gut, half black, half orange, with gaudy tail and wings; black heckle, jay cravat, and dark blue mohair head. If you rise a fish, and that in two or three casts he refuses, try the grey-bodied fly, red under the wing (which is not to be so gaudy), and claret-coloured head; 'tis ten to one he takes this latter one. Also green-silk-bodied and fur flies; green olives and brown flies of various shades and sizes, to match the water, according to its height, brightness, or darkness.

The reach above Lismore Castle, called the "Powdering Tub," is generally full of salmon, and so it is about and under the bridge, and from thence to the Island Stream, the New Stream, and Divine's Stream. To fish these streams you must wade a considerable way. And I here repeat what I have already recommended, that every angler intending to fish these streams

should be provided with a pair of old worthless shoes, in which, having taken off his stockings, he can wade to the little islands, and afterwards put on his dry shoes and stockings. There are several other good fishing places all down the river, by Mr. Morgan's and Nicholas Purcell O'Gorman's ; that is, if the salmon are not wattled up the river, and driven into the weir, by Mr. Foley's myrmidons, for such is the practice. There are also some very nice temporary lodges, where the salmon do not remain long ; but where, if they meet your fly on the way, they are apt to take. The last lodge I think worth noticing is Trawgeen, and a most excellent one it is, situated on Mr. Charnley's ground, who most generously permits every gentleman to angle. One of his sons, Captain Charnley, is a very good angler, but seldom at home. It was the custom for every angler, who wished for sport on

the Blackwater, to inquire for a man of the name of Halahan, who lived in Lismore ; he was a carpenter, a very decent man, an excellent fly-tier, and perfectly conversant with this river. Halahan is now dead, and a great loss he is to anglers. I am bound to acknowledge being indebted to his suggestions for a great part of my knowledge of the Blackwater. He thought my flies too gaudy—I thought his too plain: truth might lie between ; and on that principle I acted, and as long as I fished I was more successful than any angler I met. Mr. Croaker, sub-inspector, (now stipendiary magistrate in Tipperary,) and Mr. Henry Sullivan, are also both of them excellent anglers, but fished with the monstrous rods I have described ; and here too I met an English gentleman of the name of P —, the best English salmon-fisher I ever saw. This excellent and amiable man was driven from

Lismore, where he was living happily, loved and regarded by all the gentry in the neighbourhood, by the indiscreet zeal of a young priest, who on this occasion evinced a most unnecessary solicitude for the morals of the fair part of his congregation, who were certainly not in the slightest danger from Mr. P——'s gallantries ; but it was perhaps from a neglect of those, here considered necessary, attentions, that he was subjected to the charge. An Irishman would have laughed at all this, but Mr. P—— was too steady, too matter-of-fact, to stomach the idea of a school-mistress, full of virtuous indignation at his supposed delinquency, attempting to cast his sensualities in his teeth. So Mr. P—— left the country, and the priest was prosecuted for beating Mr. P——'s boy, who was accused of acting the part of a Mercury in the business. His reverence was acquitted, the boy's father

having sworn that it was by his desire the castigation was administered.

The salmon here though often curdy, are not so rich or good as those of the Fergus or Shannon, nor will a fish taken with a hook be good for any thing, if sent a considerable distance. Cider is excellent in this district, and is drunk without danger after salmon. The gentry are hospitable, agreeable, and well bred ; possessing many fine seats, where they live a great deal. To this cause may the tranquil state of this part of the island be mainly attributed. Nothing can be more beautiful than the drive between Fermoy and Cappoquin—comprising wood, water, and mountain scenery. On the highest peak is buried Major Ecces, with his gun, fishing-rod, horse, and a couple of frogs, and if his spirit looks out occasionally, a most expansive view it can have from Knock Meldown. Near the Blackwater, runs the Bridde, a con-



siderable river, which is also netted. The fish are said to be much preferable to those of the Blackwater. It is to be remarked that when the latter river clears, and gets low, the flies must be much smaller, and less gaudy—the wings chiefly turkey feather, brown mallard or pheasant tail, and very few turns of gold or silver cord, and the bodies generally of two colours, for instance, grey, and red brown under the wings : a green body with a red, or grouse feather as heckle, and a little fiery brown under the wings. I have found the large Dromore fly excellent, and a small yellow fly, with a little breast feather gold pheasant, and the plain white feather of the Mallard, with Kingfisher at each side of the wing ; and this is a most excellent trout fly on all the lakes. The salmon take trout-flies occasionally, and *vice versa*. The small fry is good, and if too large, the head is cut off, and managed in the way I have

already directed : the loach, which is caught in the mountain streams, is also good. There are a good many pike, but I have not seen any large ones. They are frequently met between Fermoy and Lismore, where the river is often cross-fished ; and to show the inefficacy of the law against this practice, it is impossible to convict, as the offenders do not use a cross line, but tie their lines together, and have the links and flies dependent from the wheel-line, so that when a fish is hooked about the centre, they slip down each of the intervening flies, to the very one on which the fly is, and then have him at once under the butt of the rod. This is ingenious enough ; but in case of strong cross winds, there must be a great deal of entangling : at any rate the act is evaded, which is expressly directed against using cross lines, stroakalls, or gaffs.

So much for legislation ; this practice is

now prudently permitted, poor amends indeed to anglers for the mischiefs of the late act. In the months of October and November the largest fish run ; these are the fish that have been kept above the weir the whole season, and not suffered to drop down in time ; they are called winter fish, and a much larger run than the spring ones, but are of little value, though perfectly clear and white. Their time for refreshing in the sea is too short, but they hasten notwithstanding to their usual haunts to deposit their spawn. I have before given my opinion on the necessity of opening all weirs from Saturday evening to Monday morning. There is scarcely any time of the year in which a prime salmon may not be taken, but until the month of April a great many of what are called retrievers are met : these are bad, and though to an unpractised eye they look well, I make it a practice always to liberate them.

I have not fished on this river for some years, having had a difference with one of the proprietors of the weir—*not* Mr. Cliffe, who is a gentleman and sportsman. The dark green olive flies are excellent on this river, and sometimes dark clarets and blacks. Single gut when the water lowers is fully sufficient, and tolerably large flies answer, tied on loops of single gut. A canal has been made by the duke as far as Lismore, and no further, the river above the weir being navigable for many miles.

The trout fishery in this river is pretty good. I have seen a pensioner of the name of Harael, kill several trout with what I should call a very strange kind of fly—the body fox's fur, a very small hackle at the head and no wing whatsoever, the fly not large. I have not trout-fished this river myself, though I have often caught one with a salmon fly ; and when the water is low, a

large-sized Inchiquin fly with peacock breast feather, partridge tail, and rail feather mixed for wing, is right good for salmon ; the body claret or deep brown pig's fur, with a red heckle.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

ON THE WEATHER—MY WRITING-MASTER'S OPINIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS—LITTLE FAITH IN ASTRONOMERS AND  
PHILOSOPHERS—SCRIPTURE AND JOSHUA—INTOLERANT NO-  
TIONS—MY OWN OPINIONS ON THE WEATHER AND CHANGES  
OF THE MOON.

SINCE my childhood I have been an angler ;  
and I perfectly recollect a conversation  
with my instructor in the noble art of pen-  
manship, Mr. David Burke, whom I am  
called on to describe not only as an angler,  
but as a man.

Know, then, that Mr. David Burke was  
a most excellent river angler, of the Wal-  
tonian school, with this difference, that he  
was of a very selfish nature, and really  
thought that to angle a mile above, or a  
mile below the mills of Ennis, was an

actual intrusion on his and his family's rights ; and though he was obliged to submit to the encroachment, it was with a bad grace, particularly if within these limits he saw a trout of a pound or two flying into the air, abstracted from its native element by the hand of some bungler. I will now relate, as well as I can, the substance of a discourse of his, which has been long and indelibly fixed on my mind.

“Now, my dear boy, depend on it, it is no matter whether the wind is east, west, north, or south the, best day for angling is the day on which a man kills fish. Of this you may be assured ; for I have often killed trout and salmon when the wind was piercing me from the north, or east, or from both together ; and, on the other hand, when I have had fine southerly and westerly breezes, I have completely failed in doing so ; and mark me, this was when the river was

full of fish, too: for, let the wind be as it will, there is no killing fish where they are not.

“I have been lately talking to your excellent father on his unreasonableness in preventing you from practising the noble art of angling, and his folly in sending you to Tom Meehan’s school, to learn astronomy, and other fooleries. Take my word for it, astronomers and philosophers are all blockheads, and, what is worse, seldom moral or religious men; and it is even said that Tom Meehan himself does not lead the best of lives. Why, the fellow actually pretends that the sun stands still. What! Do I not, when getting up of a fine day, see it out of my own window rise over the pound, and in the evening set opposite my back door in the west? To be sure, at times there is a difference more or less to the south or north, or so; but this is all the will of God. Be-



sides it is profane to hold any other opinion. Are we not taught in the holy Scriptures that the sun was ordered to stand still at the wish of Joshua ? And surely, if it was not moving, there was no necessity for stopping it.

“I have been told that the pope was going to burn some philosophers. I wish he had. It would have been a good turn for example's sake, and for preventing persons meddling with what they don't understand. Now, my boy, you go to the Latin school. The consequence will be, that your head will be stuffed with all sorts of nonsense, and you will either get cracked from too much learning, or give up the entire business, and become a scape-grace, or a fanatic. Take my advice, however, and stick to your holy religion. I know you are obliged to attend the sermon. Get the text carefully by heart ; and as soon as you have heard it,

you can have a couple of hours' sport up the river, for Doctor Barrett takes about so long preaching. Then, when you return home, repeat the text as positive proof of your attention to your religious duties. It can't be expected you should know any thing more about the matter."

Such was David Burke ; but, notwithstanding his opinions, there are, certain times, signs and indications in the weather worth observation ; and I will presume to offer some hints that may be of use to an angler, though, as in the words of Izaak Walton, "he who waits for the wind will never sow," so he that would have the wind in the point he chooses, may be a good while without sport. When the wind changes from a good point, say south or west to north, or north-east, the angling is bad till it is fixed for some days, after which the fish rise freely, and will take

small trolls, such as loaches, salmon fry, gravelin, roach, little eels, &c. I have been much surprised to see salmon rise in rather dead flats, with scarcely any wind, when north-east, and in a bright sun, and sometimes better than in cloudy weather.

When you can see far into the water, the fishing is invariably bad. When a great glut of rain impends after a drought, fish will not take. When there is thunder in the air, trout or salmon will not take, but pike often will, though it is thought that lightning destroys them, as they are often found floating or dying after great thunder storms. The weather at such times puts a complete end to trout and salmon-fishing.

“So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,  
That swathes, as with a purple cloud,  
Benlode’s distant hill.”

SCOTT.

In rivers the best winds are those which

blow against the currents, particularly if they run west or south, as the Shannon and Fergus for the most part ; and the best days are those with rattling showers, and light, well-coloured clouds, that impart a healthy tinge to the waters—of this appearance every good angler is a judge.

In Spring, salmon take finely at the tail of a hail shower, and so they will on a blowing hazy day. During the prevalence of rainbows I have ever found angling useless on lake or river, and so it is on a harsh dry day when it blows hard.

In February or March, salmon take in the heat of the day ; when the sun gets warmer, from about eight to eleven in the morning, and from about three in the evening till nightfall ; but in the peal season (June and July) you cannot be out too early, nor do they take so late as the larger fish ; in the Shannon we were always out at four

in the morning, and fished till eleven, then lay by till after two, after which we continued till sun-set, I mean for the peal or small salmon. These observations will equally apply to lake fishing, but trout will rise much later than salmon, often all through the night.

At the changes of new and full moon, fishing is bad. On this point J——n H——n disagrees with me, he, pretending to have had sport at those times, but I decidedly think he is wrong. When the moon shines visibly and unclouded during the day the effect is bad. This occurs from the second quarter to full. The best time of the moon is after the full, and until it assumes the appearance I have described.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

WALTON AND COTTON—PRAISE OF THE WORK—SCIENCE OF ANGLING THEN LITTLE UNDERSTOOD—WRONG PRINCIPLE OF FLY-TIEING—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS—SALMON FISHING WITHOUT A WHEEL—THROWING A LINE AGAINST THE WIND—GOOD EFFECT OF CHANGING FROM ONE SIDE OF A RIVER TO THE OPPOSITE WHEN PRACTICABLE—LORD BYRON—ADVICE.

WALTON's celebrated book should be in every angler's pocket ; for though the science was then in its infancy, yet, independently of the many pretty pieces of poetry, fine descriptions of scenery, and the wholesome spirit of devotion and gratitude to our Divine Creator, which breathe through many of its pages, the directions are of great value, though in the article of fly-tieing, certainly very complex and unintelligible.

It appears that the general principle was

to put on the wing first ; this was right as to the green and grey drake, the hare's ear fly with starling wing, and a few others ; but the generality of spotted wing flies have the wing lying close on the back, and it should be put on last. The authors seem to have known little of salmon fishing, and seldom used a wheel, or, as they called it, a winch ; nor did they attach that value to gut which every one now knows it possesses. To think of holding a large-sized trout in a rapid or rocky stream, with one or two hairs, without a wheel and a sufficiency of line, is perfectly ridiculous.

My old writing-master, David Burke, already mentioned, told me that he had often fished for salmon without a wheel ; the line being of hair and of knotted pieces, the upper link sixteen hairs, tapering down to nine, and the line of a length nearly to reach across the river. He began at the upper end of

a course, and fished downwards along it. When a salmon was hooked, he was played in the best way he could manage, until he came near the bank ; the line was then rolled on the left hand in such a way as to run off, until the fish was tired ; but divers casualties occasionally occurred, and line and salmon were often lost.

One fine fishing day, being alone, he hooked a salmon, which he declared was above fifty pounds weight, and after more than an hour's play, having his line in his hand as I describe, he was preparing to gaff the gentleman, as he was coming in apparently tired, when he turned short round ; the line did not run off his hands ; he was nearly pulled into the water, and away went this splendid fish, taking all with him. As to throwing a line against the wind, it was not thought of in those days, nor do I think it has been long practised ; but now no



man is a good angler who, with a properly constructed rod, cannot do so:—and observe the advantage of it. How often is a salmon risen from one side, and from that side will not rise again; come then to the opposite side; the fly falls over him differently, and ten to one he takes it. An instance illustrative of this occurred on the 28th March, 1839, on the Fergus. After trying several flies over a fine salmon, which rose twice at me, I at last crossed the river in my boat, threw across and against the wind, and at the second or third cast, pinned him.

I again recommend all my brother anglers to possess themselves of Walton and Cotton, the latter of whom was certainly the more scientific and the better fly-tier, besides that he did not deserve to share Lord Byron's reproach so justly launched at the shade of poor Izaak, for recommending the

angler to hold the frog as if he loved him, when putting him alive on a hook.

Let us all, brother anglers, avoid subjecting ourselves to such well-merited castigation. Fishing may be made a very innocent or a very cruel sport, according to the spirit and the practice brought to bear upon it. The one rule, not to put any animal to *unnecessary* pain, will be found sufficient for our guidance in every instance.

## CHAPTER XXV.

ON PIKE-FISHING, AND THE VARIOUS WAYS USED, AND TO BE USED FOR THEIR DESTRUCTION—ACCOUNT OF THE LARGEST PIKE EVER KILLED—A MONSTER PIKE, JUDGED OF BY ITS SEIZING A FISH OF ITS OWN SPECIES, SEVENTEEN POUNDS WEIGHT—METHOD OF DRESSING.

As I consider it perfectly meritorious to destroy these fierce and destructive animals in every practicable way, except by nets, I purpose giving the result of my experience, though I cannot say it is a kind of fishing I like. If you fish with frogs, kill them ; and this is no easy matter, as you must knock them often against a stone before they are dead : have the fear of Lord Byron before your eyes, and don't hold the frog as if " you had loved him," but instantly put him out of pain.

The small trout, the roach, the salmon-

fry, a small herring, the tail of an eel spangled and tinselled, are excellent; so is a small jack, and sometimes a good-sized one; so is a gold-finch, a swallow or yellow-hammer. My method of putting up a fry, or small trout, or roach, is to have the hook come out in the middle of its side with a curve in the tail to spin. The head (when I was intent on real destruction,) I fastened with another hook let slip down on the wire, or gimp, with a very small loop well armed, and this latter hook came out through the back part of the head. I have often taken more pike, and even trout, with the upper hook than the lower; for fish of prey generally make at the head. David Burke's method of catching pike was curious: he fished with a double hook, without swivel—put his chain through the fish's mouth, and drew it out at the navel—tied the

chain about the tail, and left the double hook projecting through the mouth of the trout, or fry, or frog. In this way the bait was dragged tail-foremost ; but he did not care, and laughed at any other method, and he always killed a great number of pike, and sometimes an odd salmon or so. He left the bait a very short time to any fish, and generally had him well hooked. This should seem an unnatural method, but it is a sure one.

They are a very whimsical fish, and the kind of bait must be frequently changed. I have often shot a pretty small bird for a bait, and killed large pike with it, when they would not look at trout or roach. A good-sized pike fly is often very good. The largest pike I ever killed was thirty two pounds weight ; he had a trout of four pounds entire in his maw, which he must have taken only just before he

had made at a small roach which I had on a single brass wire ; and it must have been from sheer wantonness, or sport, that he seized it : he was only three feet four inches in length, but as thick as a salmon. Colonel R. G. Hare (who could not go with me that day to Dromore, but walked more than a mile to meet me,) was astonished at him. Both of us guessed him at forty pounds, but he only weighed thirty-two pounds.

A pike which I had hold of on Lough Tedane, and lost, (he having swallowed the chain, and cut the line,) was afterwards found dead and unsound ; and the man who found him, and gave me back the hook, declared that he measured five feet eight inches, and was thick in proportion. Whether he told truth or not, I can't say. I have already given an instance of the rapacity of a pike in laying hold on a

trout of more than six pound weight, which the late Master of the Rolls, Sir M. O'Loughlen, had on a cross-line ; but this was a trifle to what I witnessed on Dro-more. A large pike was hooked, and nearly exhausted, when he was suddenly seized and carried to the bottom. Every effort was made for nearly half an hour to bring this enormous fish to some shore, (where we might perhaps have induced him to *take a large roach*,) but to no purpose ; when, finding our efforts unavailing, we succeeded at last, by making a noise with the oars, and pulling at the line. In getting up the pike we had been playing, it was all torn as if by a large dog ; and this pike actually weighed *seventeen pounds* ! the fish which held him so long must have been a monster, indeed !

The best time for catching these rapa-

cious devils is the morning ; and if hazy with little wind, so much the better. I mean on the lakes : for pike-fishing, a river without a boat is slavish and disagreeable work. The pike of Clare are very fine : the best way of dressing them is first to boil, and let cool ; bone them quite clear—stew them afterwards with catsup, butter, a little red pepper, and a blade or two of mace ; thus dressed, they prove a wholesome and safe fish to eat.\*

Beware of thrusting your fingers between the grinders of a pike ; they are dreadful even in death, and bite desperately. Have by you a short sharp stick, pointed at both ends, before you attempt to take out the hook. I always hold against a pike, and strike in a short time. As to bladders,

\* The late Doctor Edward M'Grath, a kind and most experienced physician, an excellent friend and an accomplished orator, considered pike, eaten fresh, the very best possible description of fish, and the safest to eat.



trimmers, fishing with baits tied to the legs of geese, &c., of all such I shall say nothing. I am for the rod and the sport.

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